



Reedhead, F.W.,

ll. rev. 787 q-1

<36637049630019

<36637049630019

Bayer. Staatsbibliothek

THE
FRENCH REVOLUTIONS.

REVOLUTION

REVOLUTION

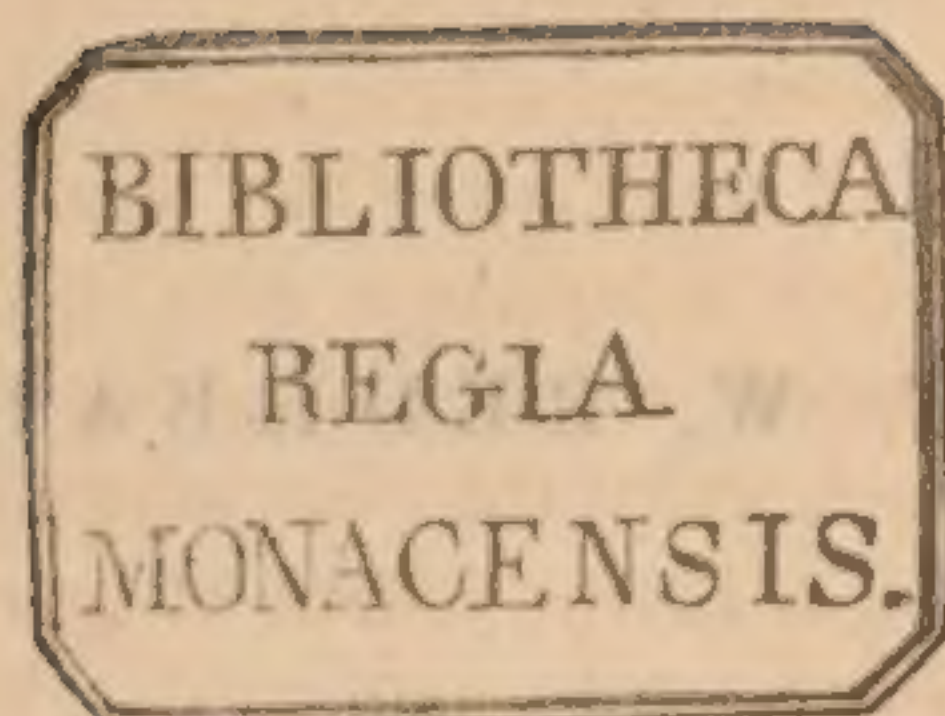
THE
FRENCH REVOLUTIONS

FROM 1789 TO 1848.

BY T. W. REDHEAD.

VOLUME I.

EDINBURGH:
WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS.
1848.



EDINBURGH:

PRINTED BY W. AND R. CHAMBERS.

PREFACE.

THE French Revolution, which commenced under Louis XVI. in 1789, and which, under various modifications and phases, has been in operation ever since, is, of all others which have occurred in the history of the world, the event that has exercised the most important and decisive influence on the destinies of mankind. The lessons its extraordinary occurrences and stupendous consequences convey are invaluable, since they teach by the most emphatic testimonies those immutable laws of Providential guidance which sway the dispensations of good and evil, of rewards and retributions, in the affairs of men and nations; and they likewise teach to rulers and communities how best they may secure, by timely and prudent sacrifices, the blessings of good government, without passing through the fiery ordeal of a social convulsion. As was natural, such an event has been treated in every variety of temper and reflection, each writer, animated by the spirit of party, striving to enforce his own peculiar views, and often misrepresenting, always colouring, facts to support his predetermined conclusions. The time is now come, however, when it may be described with truth and impartiality; when the passions of the partisan may merge in the cooler deductions of reason; when it may be considered without any bias tending to obscure the judgment or vitiate the veritable development.

The French Revolution has brought to the test of proof every possible modification of government: in it every class of a large community has been tried in the exercise of power, and unhappily found wanting. Extreme democracy led to a military despotism; the turbulent empire of the sword collapsed into the feebleness of a decayed royalty; an effete branch of an old dynasty gave way to the hardier and more astute descendant of the common race, who in his turn has been hurled from his eminence by another outburst of those passions which seated him on a throne, and which he vainly thought to repress by artifice and the arms of soldiers. Such are the strange vicissitudes that mark the momentous era from 1789 to 1848, an interval of sixty years, pregnant with yet unseen consequences, but which

has never yet been presented in one complete and homogeneous narrative, whereby, from the traced concatenation of causes and effects throughout its entire course, an accurate perception of the Revolution, or, more properly, series of Revolutions, may be formed.

In the present work this task has been attempted; and in its execution the author can with great sincerity affirm that he has studied to render it impartial, demonstrative, and exact, having with indefatigable care consulted all the best and original sources of information which lie scattered in voluminous collections; the most important of which, as to the earlier period of the Revolution, is found in the *Mémoires de la Révolution Française*, published at Paris in sixty-six volumes, and written for the most part by the actors in the scenes they describe. By a studious collation of these numerous authorities alone can the real character and details of events be learned, so conflicting are the accounts given of the same transactions by different authors, according to their respective biases and prejudices. Every incident, therefore, is presented in its true aspect, so far as research and deliberation render this possible amid the distortions and misstatements of prejudiced annalists.

NOTE, ETHNOGRAPHIC AND HISTORICAL.—Although the political and social condition of a people, and particularly the state of education among them, are the main elements out of which violent civil commotions producing revolutions arise, still, in forming a correct appreciation of the French Revolution, its events and consequences on the nations at large, it ought to be borne in mind that the original stock of the French people is *Celtic*, and that notwithstanding the admixture of numerous other races, they retain in a remarkable manner the peculiar characteristics of their first ancestors as pictured in the immortal narrative of Cæsar. With great aptitude for the highest intellectual efforts and the superior arts of civilisation, they combine all the impulsive tendencies and enthusiastic temperament which have always distinguished the Celtic race. Hence that thirst of novelty, that impatience of repose, in which they see only an inglorious oblivion of France, that ready credence to the wildest theories, that perversion of ideas leading them to confound the worst passions or blindest impulses with the opposite virtues, which they have dis-

played in so remarkable a manner throughout the history of the last half century.

Originally Celtic, Gaul was first overrun by the Romans, who, besides many interesting architectural remains, have left a more enduring evidence of their presence in the language of the country. The French are fond of tracing their descent from the Roman invaders; and to this predilection is probably to be ascribed their remarkable attachment to the titles, insignia, and usages of the ancient Romans. Whatever was the nature of the Roman dominion in Gaul, it was obliterated by the incursions of the Franks—a Gothic people, who finally, under Clovis, conquered the country towards the end of the fifth century, and have given to it a name. Clovis was crowned at Rheims in 496, and thus began the Merovingian dynasty, which lasted till the middle of the eighth century, when sinking into decay, it was dispossessed by the more energetic Carlovingian race. The usurper was Pepin the Short, son of Charles Martel, whose heroism prevented the conquest of France by the Saracens, 732. Pepin died in 768, and was succeeded by his son Charlemagne, a man of gigantic genius, who enlarged and strengthened the monarchy, and greatly promoted the rise of learning and refinement. Genius is not hereditary: at the death of Charlemagne in 814, he was succeeded by his son, Louis le Debonnaire, under whose sons the empire was broken up; France falling to the share of Charles I., surnamed the Bald. The sovereignty of France now subsided into a species of feudal superiority over dukes and counts, who exercised unlimited sway in their respective provinces. On the death of Louis V. in 987, the Carlovingian race in the direct line became extinct. The throne, now vacant, was claimed by Charles, Duke of Lorraine, uncle to the deceased king; but the French nobility, supported by the Pope, favoured the pretensions of Hugh Capet, who accordingly became king; and thus, as far as legitimate or hereditary right was concerned, the crown was a second time usurped. Hugh Capet was the son of Hugh, Duke of the Isle of France, and Count of Paris and Orleans, who had exercised an unlimited power in the court of the deceased monarch.

Thus commenced in 987 a royal line, which, in its different branches, has given a hundred and twenty sovereigns to Europe. Under the Capetian line, the French monarchy was strengthened by a gradual absorption of the subordinate powers; also by the better administration of justice enjoined by Louis IX., or the Saint, in 1270; and by the creation of a third estate (*tiers état*), consisting of deputies from the cities to the great assemblies of the nation. This latter event took place in the reign of Philip IV., or Le Bel, 1301.

The first branch of the Capet dynasty came to an end in the person of Charles IV., who died 1328; and now commenced the branch of

Valois, by the ascent to the throne of Philip VI. This was a dismal period of French history. The nation was convulsed with civil war, mainly produced by the pretensions of the kings of England to the crown, but also by the deadly feuds which raged between the nobility and people. In 1358, France was overrun by masses of furious peasantry, or *Jacquerie*, who plundered and murdered all who fell into their hands. As is usual in all such cases, social and political order were regained only by increased powers in the sovereign. Standing armies were introduced (1444), the central authority consolidated, and the humbler orders reduced to an obedience abject and hopeless. The branch of Valois terminated in the death of Charles VIII. 1497, and was succeeded by the branch of Orleans in the person of Louis XII. This came to a conclusion in 1589, by the death of Henry III.; and the branch of Bourbon, which now ascended the throne in the person of Henry IV., remained in power till the Revolution. Henry IV. died by assassination 1610; and the succeeding princes of this line were Louis XIII., who died 1643; Louis XIV., who died 1715; Louis XV., who died 1774; and lastly, Louis XVI., who was overtaken by the great revolutionary commotion whose history we propose to relate.

CONTENTS.

	Page
INTRODUCTION.—SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CONDITION OF FRANCE FROM 1774 TO 1789, - - -	7
CHAPTER I.—STATES-GENERAL—CAPTURE OF THE BASTILLE—5TH MAY TO 14TH JULY 1789, - - -	27
II.—VISIT OF LOUIS XVI. TO PARIS—LABOURS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ON THE CONSTITUTION— STORMING OF THE PALACE OF VERSAILLES—14TH JULY TO 5TH OCTOBER 1789, - -	43
III.—SITTINGS OF THE ASSEMBLY AT PARIS—SOLEMN IDEN- TIFICATION OF THE KING WITH THE REVOLUTION —NATIONAL FEDERATION—6TH OCTOBER 1789 TO 14TH JULY 1790, - - -	72
IV.—ANARCHICAL STATE OF FRANCE—CIVIL CONSTITUTION OF THE CLERGY—FLIGHT OF LOUIS XVI. TO VARENNES—14TH JULY 1790 TO 26TH JUNE 1791,	105
V.—WAR DECLARED AGAINST AUSTRIA—INSURRECTIONS OF THE 20TH JUNE AND 10TH AUGUST—SUSPEN- SION OF THE KING—JULY 1791 TO AUGUST 1792,	137
VI.—NATIONAL CONVENTION—TRIAL AND EXECUTION OF LOUIS XVI.—SEPTEMBER 1792 TO 21ST JANUARY 1793, - - - -	184
VII.—INVASION OF BELGIUM BY THE FRENCH, AND ITS SUBSEQUENT RECONQUEST—DOWNFALL OF THE GIRONDINS—OCTOBER 1792 TO 2D JUNE 1793,	242
VIII.—THE REIGN OF TERROR—GENERAL INVASION OF FRANCE BY THE ALLIES—FEROCITIES OF THE JACOBINS IN LA VENDEE, AT LYONS, AND ELSE- WHERE—JUNE TO DECEMBER 1793, -	280

HISTORY

OF THE

FRENCH REVOLUTIONS.

INTRODUCTION.

SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CONDITION OF FRANCE FROM 1774 TO 1789.

LOUIS XVI. succeeded to the throne of France on the death of his grandfather, Louis XV., in 1774. He was only in his twentieth year, but had been already married five years to Marie-Antoinette, a daughter of the celebrated empress-queen, Maria-Theresa, of Austria.

The monarchy of France was at this period almost a pure despotism. No trace existed of the old feudal system, in which the vassals of the crown held their suzerain in greater or less dependence. Institutions of any other origin, tending effectually to check the exercise of power, had never prevailed. Philip Augustus and Louis XI. had laid the foundation of undivided empire, which their successors enlarged and consolidated, until Cardinal Richelieu, under Louis XIII., completed the fabric, and handed over to Louis XIV. an unlimited sovereignty. This latter prince was gifted with many brilliant qualities, vitiated by an inordinate vanity and ambition; so that, although his reign has around it a certain lustre, sufficient to dazzle the superficial eye, and his age was one of intellectual triumphs and social progress, yet in it was the train of evils prepared which eventually led to the crisis of revolution. He bequeathed to his great-grandson, Louis XV., an impoverished inheritance, which a wise economy might have retrieved, but which his dissoluteness and misrule yet further exhausted. Louis XVI., therefore, ascended an absolute throne; but the resources of his realm, and the energies of his people, had been wasted and paralysed.

The young monarch, unlike the generality of his race, was virtuous, animated with the best intentions, and sincerely desirous

of doing good. But he was wholly inexperienced, and obliged to rely upon the counsel and agency of others. To be initiated in the art of governing, he abandoned himself to the direction of a man recommended by the partiality of his father, and his length of years—Maurepas, who was already seventy-three years old.* Age, however, had failed to impart wisdom, or to rectify the original defects of character; and Maurepas was still a mere courtier, intent to palliate difficulties, rather than, by a vigorous policy, to eradicate them. Himself infirm of purpose, he did but strengthen that inherent tendency in the king's own mind, and trained him in the vacillation which proved the bane and besetting vice of his life. His choice of ministers, nevertheless, was good, if he had properly supported them in their measures of amelioration. Turgot and Malesherbes were associated in the administration, and both were inclined to introduce an extensive reform in all the more crying abuses that afflicted the country. They were eminently fitted to accomplish the task, if ability, honesty, and enlightened views could have availed in the enterprise; but against the force of corrupt influences in counteraction they were powerless, and failed. Louis himself was sensible of all Turgot's merit, and of the sagacity of his schemes; and in consenting to his dismissal, he exclaimed, 'Turgot and I are alone desirous of promoting the welfare of the people.' A monarch is truly to be pitied who, impressed with such a conviction, yet lacks the determination, or perhaps the means, to uphold a judicious minister, and enforce a timely and prudent reformation.†

If Turgot's plans had been adopted even partially, there can be little doubt but the frightful convulsion that ensued would have been averted, or at least indefinitely postponed. Yet such was the state of France at this time, such the complication of interests arrayed against the common good, such the inveteracy of prejudices and the blindness of conceit, that improvement or redress of grievances was feasible only by the way of such a catastrophe. A strong interposition of power itself might have accomplished the aim; but, with the exception of the unfortunate king himself, none who shared or prompted its exercise would hearken to any

* Chamfort relates in his memoirs that Maurepas in some degree entrapped the king, who had sent for him merely to converse on the state of France. At the close of their interview Maurepas said—'Your majesty, then, appoints me prime minister?' 'No,' replied the king; 'that is not at all my intention.' 'I understand,' observed Maurepas; 'your majesty wishes me to teach you how to dispense with one?' So he entered upon his preceptorship.

† 'Turgot and the virtuous Malesherbes,' say the editors of Weber's *Memoirs*, vol. i. p. 137, 'retired about the same time. Their zeal for the public welfare was equal. They both acquired the enmity of all who dreaded the reform of abuses.' A league was formed to drive them from office. 'The efforts of this league,' it is said in a writing of the time, quoted in the *Secret Correspondence of the Court of Louis XVI.*, p. 150, 'are directed principally against M. Turgot and M. de Malesherbes, and that because the report is general those two ministers are on the eve of commencing a reform in the expenses of the court.'

warning, or entertain any idea of a sacrifice. A revolution, therefore, was inevitable, because it was necessary.

The condition of France, social, political, and religious, was indeed mournful. At her head sat a king on whom was accumulated every attribute of authority, and on whose will all fortunes depended. Around him was clustered a crowd of venal nobles, who contended for his favours with adulation, and breathed only in the sunshine of his smiles. Wholly destitute of independence of spirit, these nobles were licentious and arrogant, battenning, without shame, on the spoils of the people, and priding themselves on lineages they disgraced.* To them was added a fit concomitancy of women, who revelled in the contemptible arts of intrigue, and the flagitious indulgences of profligacy. At a distance, still dependent on the nod of the monarch or his creatures, filling all the superior offices of the government, the law, the army, and the navy, was the residuum of the nobility, of an inferior grade to that which thronged the purlieus of the court. A body of resident landed proprietors was unknown except in some of the western provinces. The church, too, was exclusively aristocratical in its organisation. The dignitaries were men of noble birth, enjoying immense revenues, and living for the most part in total disregard of their duties.† The working clergy were poor, and devoid

* The court of Louis XVI. was unquestionably more decorous than that of his grandfather, which was a scene of monstrous iniquity; but still a very loose morality was its characteristic. The Prince de Montbarey gives a striking instance of this in his memoirs. He was minister of the war department, married, and advanced in years. Yet he assures, with a gravity conclusive of truth, that on the choice of a new mistress he consulted Maurepas and *the king himself*, who both approved of his employing M. Lenoir, the lieutenant-general of police, as his agent in the selection! The Marquis de Bouillé gives evidence which, from such a source, is incontestable. 'Situating amidst the most corrupt of courts,' he says, speaking of Louis XVI., 'the king alone preserved purity of manners; with irreligion and atheism around him, he was still pious; and to the outrageous luxury prevailing he opposed a marked personal economy.'—*Memoirs*, p. 61. Of the nobility, Bouillé reckons there were eighty thousand families, not above a thousand of which could trace their descent from the early times of the monarchy. He adds—'Among these latter, two or three hundred at the utmost had escaped decay and loss of fortune. Great names were still heard at court, which recalled the remembrance of the great men who had illustrated them, but which were too often disgraced by the vices of those who had inherited them.'—*Id.* 50.

† They kept about the court for the most part, soliciting preferments, and mingling in all the petty plots and cabals of the palace. Thus we find them interfere in a truly important concern which occurred on Marie-Antoinette's marriage. At the request of Maria-Theresa, Louis XV. had ordered that a certain Mademoiselle de Lorraine, a distant connexion of her husband, Francis of Lorraine, should take precedence after the members of the royal family in walking a minuet. Immediately the whole of the high nobility assembled at the house of the Archbishop of Rheims to protest against this order; but that prelate being indisposed, they adjourned to the mansion of the Bishop of Noyon, the second ecclesiastical peer in rank, who presided over their councils, and presented their remonstrance to the king. Such an affair afforded a rich subject of satire to Grimm, who accordingly handles it with great humour in his *Correspondence*, tome vii. p. 143.

of influence. Beneath all, there was the bulk of the population, urban and rural, who may be said to have literally possessed no rights, except that of paying taxes. True, in the towns there were trade corporations; but being accessible only to those who could purchase their immunities, they were, like all monopolies, injurious to the community at large. All the burdens of the state fell on the industrious and productive classes. The nobility was exempt, and the clergy had the privilege of contributing only what they pleased. The most oppressive mode of collecting the taxes prevailed, since they were farmed by contractors, who sought their profit in the rigorous exaction of the uttermost mite. These were called farmers-general, and were naturally objects of popular abhorrence. Two-thirds of the whole land of the country were in the possession of the nobility and clergy, who, not content with their fiscal exemption, imposed upon the cultivators feudal dues and services of the most onerous and harassing description. The right of killing game was reserved to the landlords; and tenants were even forbidden, by special edicts, to till their ground, or reap their crops, if the preservation of young broods might be thereby endangered. Manorial courts were scattered through the land, to take summary vengeance on delinquents in any of these particulars. In fact, the rural population was, to a certain extent, in a state of serfdom,* continually exposed to galling and degrading tyranny, which the inhabitants of towns escaped only to undergo humiliations and vexations of an analogous nature.

It was impossible that agriculture could flourish under such untoward circumstances. Instead of being protected and encouraged in his indispensable calling, the husbandman was regarded as a species of drudge, appointed by nature to toil for the benefit of superiors. The king, the nobility, and the clergy, all considered him in this light, and contended which should wring from him the most in the various shapes of taxes, rents, dues, and tithes. Thus cultivation was in the rudest state, and the naturally fertile soil yielded but a fraction of the produce it might have been stimulated to rear. Travellers who traversed France at this epoch, concur in representing abject poverty and wretchedness as the universal lot of the peasantry. Nor was it otherwise with commerce. Industry was fettered by a thousand shackles. Rulers have, in every age and country, with strange perversity, marked trade and its followers for their legitimate prey, and, in the alternate guise of exaction and restriction, laboured to cramp its development. The right to carry on business, to exercise a profession, was a matter of purchase. Not only were there chartered

* Serfdom actually existed, and the Duke de Larochebonne stated on the 7th August 1789 that there were a million and a-half of serfs in France.—*Bailly*, vol. ii. p. 214.

guilds to enter through a long novitiate and a heavy outlay, but the king also was to be bought. Licenses might be obtained from him to monopolise certain callings within a particular circuit, such as those of barber, wood-vender, sausage-maker, &c. When the royal treasury needed a sudden replenishment, multitudes of these licenses used to be issued, which were bought up in the first instance by capitalists, and subsequently resold by them through the country at a considerable enhancement. A regular traffic was at times maintained in this singular species of paper-money, prices being ruled naturally by the prospect, more or less promising, of plundering the community. But a yet more serious impediment stood in the way of commercial activity. Each of the provinces into which France was divided, erected upon its frontiers barriers to prevent the entrance of commodities from without, unless upon payment of heavy, and sometimes of prohibitive tolls. Nay, each town within each province did the same, as if isolation were the most desirable of boons. These tolls or duties were levied sometimes by virtue of old charters from kings or feudal lords, and sometimes under the authority of municipal enactments passed by provincial states or city corporations. The corruption and uncertainty prevailing in the administration of justice likewise tended to thwart the operations of commerce. Judicial offices were subjects of bargain and sale in every part of the kingdom, disposed of to the highest bidders, wholly irrespective of competency. Hence bribery flowed as a necessary consequence, and the courts of law degenerated into mere marts, where justice was openly bartered for gold. Thus *privilege* was the grand characteristic of France at this period, ranging through all the ramifications of her disjointed society. First, the high nobility, with sinecures and pensions often hereditary, crouched in sycophancy around the court, and regarding all others as made to minister to their gratifications. Next, the inferior nobility or gentry, who alone were eligible to be officers in the army and navy, and to fill sundry important offices; both exempt from taxation. Then the provinces, each with its portals closed against the others, and claiming peculiar franchises; so the towns, and within the towns monopolist fraternities and dealers, down to the lowest and most necessary avocations. The clergy formed a distinct body, and owned only a divided allegiance. The tax-gatherer was forbidden to approach them: they contributed to the necessities of the state by voluntary gifts, with reluctant alms in truth! Accordingly, in this strange medley of orders and classes, each wedded to the cause of privileges on separate and individual interests, we find no cohesion or union, but rather estrangement and alienation, as if in mutual antagonism; which, in sooth, was the exact predicament, for up to the hour of peril that joined them in a common league, the privileged orders were

reciprocally hostile, and contended with the crown and with each other for further and exclusive aggrandisement.

In a political point of view, the French nation had no existence. Although authority had received many rude shocks since the day when the superb Louis XIV. exclaimed, 'The State! I am the State!' yet the king still remained the sole governing power. He alone promulgated laws and imposed taxes. One check upon his absolute prerogative there was, which, according to his personal character and the complexion of the times, proved effective or abortive. It was requisite that all edicts should be registered by the parliaments of the kingdom, of which that of Paris was the principal and most important. These parliaments were, in truth, high courts of law and of appeal from inferior judicatories, and were planted in the chief cities of the kingdom. If the parliament refused to register an edict, the king, if he persisted in his purpose, held a *bed of justice*, as it was called, and in person enforced the registration. During the reign of Louis XV., the parliament of Paris had been often contumacious, and even braved the pains of exile, rather than submit to his commands. Hence it occupied the position of an opposition body, and began to nurture ambitious views of extending its sphere of action. Under the mild and indecisive Louis XVI. it waxed prodigiously in boldness; and if the Revolution had not been taken out of its hands, it would probably have effected a material modification of the government. In the earlier times of the monarchy, a species of national council had occasionally been convoked by the kings of France, to aid them by the grant of subsidies and the tender of advice. These councils were denominated States-General, and were composed of three orders or estates—the nobility, the clergy, and the commonalty, which was styled the *Tiers-Etat*, or Third Estate. This *tiers-etat* was of little account in these assemblies, being viewed by the barons and prelates with ineffable scorn, and admitted to the hall of audience only in a kneeling posture. Still, to the kings its presence was of some moment, as they were sure of its adherence in any dispute with the other orders, and could always command its suffrages for a vote of money. But the States-General were reluctantly summoned by the kings of France, for their convocation had ever been the signal for disagreeable complaints against the abuses of the royal power, and formidable attempts to curb it. Hence they had fallen into complete disuse; and the last that had been held met in 1614, under the reign of Louis XIII.

Such, then, was the state of social inequality and political nullity. The picture, it is true, is not new. It is almost that of Russia at the present moment; but how different the populations! France was the centre of enlightenment. In all arts and sciences she stood pre-eminent. Her authors enjoyed a universal repu-

tation, and swayed almost the whole realm of thought. England alone rejected their dominion, and preferred, as is her wont, her native writers. But the rest of the civilised world was their domain. The three extraordinary monarchs on the three great continental thrones—Catherine, Frederick, and Joseph—bowed down before these idols, and humbly besought their favourable notice. The petty princes of Europe were proud to rank themselves in the number of their followers. Even at home, in the palace of the Tuileries, and at Versailles, they were received with distinction. The courtiers vied with each other in doing them homage, and affected all to be philosophers and men of letters. The public of France could not be inattentive to them and their productions; the national mind was roused, the spirit of inquiry awakened, and the influence of opinion incalculably magnified.

But what doctrines did these authors teach, that made them so popular at once with kings, nobles, and commons? Not such, in truth, as might have been supposed palatable to the two former. But at that time they were considered harmless theories, charming to cogitate and speculate upon, but never intended for practical effect. Since the mistake has been discovered, they are regarded by ruling powers with more suspicion and aversion. In the eighteenth century they were hailed with universal applause. These doctrines were, that men, in the eye of nature and of justice, are equal; possess imprescriptible rights; and have an inalienable claim to regulate their own government in matters both of civil and of religious polity. Two writers above all others were distinguished in these startling discussions, whose names are still pronounced with a thrill of anger or admiration, as the tendencies of men impel their sympathies—Voltaire and Rousseau.* The first dealt in satire and sarcasm, upsetting preconceived notions by pungent irony, and throwing upon deviations from the maxims of morality and reason the blighting opprobrium of ridicule. The latter was an enthusiast who appealed more to the passions. His thoughts were crude and inconsistent, but his language was fervent and eloquent. Combined, their writings were dangerous text-books for a nation impatient of the yoke that enthralled it. Voltaire taught contempt and detestation of existing institutions, manners, and rulers; the mind thus stirred and filled with doubts Rousseau worked to frenzy by his denunciations and high-wrought pictures. Other brilliant and clever writers aided their effect, such as Diderot, Raynal, Grimm, and D'Alembert, who have been classed together as the *Encyclopedists* or *Economists*, and who can-

* "Being one day in the library with the king (whilst confined in the Temple), he pointed to the works of Rousseau and Voltaire, and said to me in a low voice, 'Those two men have ruined France.'"—*Hue's Last Years of the Reign of Louis XVI.*—published in the *Authentic Memoirs of the French Revolution*, vol. iv. p. 120.

vassed with remarkable freedom and energy all the important questions of social and political economy. Thus was the rising generation educated in ideas totally subversive of the prevailing order of things. Even against religion itself a feeling of animosity was engendered. The scandalous lives and shameless rapacity of the dignitaries of the church first aroused disgust; and when Voltaire opened his battery against the tenets and rites of the Roman Catholic faith, the elements were already half prepared for the storm of infidelity. It raged over the whole land, and involved all orders of men. Belief in everything stable was loosened; this reasoning, debating, sceptic generation panted to redress the wrongs it had become sensible of, and to repress within bounds civil and ecclesiastical excesses. Conscious of what it wanted, but ignorant how to accomplish its aim, having no means of action whereby its voice might be heard, save in an armed insurrection, it stood, as it were, in the leash, ready to spring, on the first opportunity, to vindicate its rights, and perchance to wreak its vengeance. In short, a nation of enlightened slaves awaited the watchword of emancipation.*

To assuage this burning thirst of change nothing was done, but much to aggravate it. After Turgot's failure and dismissal, De Clugny was appointed minister, who in his turn, after a trial of six months, was superseded by Necker. This latter was a man of talent, an able financier, and popular in his views. He, too, proposed reforms, but of a more cautious and progressive character than those of Turgot. He laboured to establish an equilibrium between the receipts and the disbursements of the exchequer by observing a more strict economy, and also to introduce provincial administrations as instruments of government, particularly in imposing and assessing taxes, whereby something like a national co-operation might be instituted.† But his retrench-

* The state of France, and of Europe generally, had struck the mind of Burke with gloomy forebodings; for no politician, when uninfluenced by passion, ever surpassed him in sagacity and discernment. In a remarkable passage, which occurs in the history of Europe in the 'Annual Register' for 1772, he says, 'If we seriously consider the mode of supporting great standing armies, which becomes daily more prevalent, it will appear evident that nothing less than a convulsion that will shake the globe to its centre can ever restore the European nations to that liberty by which they were once so much distinguished. The western world was its seat until another more western was discovered; and that other will probably be its asylum when it is hunted down in every other part of the world.' This would almost seem prophetic of both the French and American revolutions.

† At this period the provinces of France were governed by intendants, in lieu of the old governors, whose power had been deemed too formidable. These intendants, in all the provinces in which the States had been abolished, superintended the assessment of taxes through local bodies called *elections*, from the members being originally chosen by the inhabitants of the district, but who were then nominated by the intendants. Under this system great abuses of favouritism prevailed. The only impost—that of two-twentieths on all incomes—which the nobility and clergy paid in common with the rest of the nation,

ments offended the court and its retainers, and the parliaments took umbrage at the threatened rivalry of the provincial assemblies. The king was besieged with importunities to discard so daring an innovator, and he reluctantly yielded. Yet Necker had succeeded in restoring public credit during his administration, and in borrowing money to carry on the expensive war into which the king had been madly plunged. He is praised for inculcating a maxim which appears trite enough—namely, that in times of peace the ordinary revenue should be made to answer all the exigencies of the state, but that in times of war, recourse should be had to loans. Nevertheless, loans bear interest, and become permanent burdens on a country. Necker might display dexterity in contracting them, yet with all his rigid supervision and economy, the revenue was not equal to the expenditure when he quitted office in 1781. It is true that Necker, in the famous *Compte rendu* (Balance-sheet) published by him, made it out that the revenue exceeded the expenditure by ten millions, which was at anyrate but a small surplus; but his figures were denied by Calonne, who came after him, and who contended that, in 1781, there was a real deficiency of between fifty and sixty millions. This *Compte rendu* of Necker, however, was the foundation both of his popularity and of his reputation as a financier. He certainly was not to blame for the deficiency, which could have been obviated only by additional taxation; but the very facility he boasted in raising supplies proved eventually ruinous. If the passion for war must be indulged, it is just that the contemporary generation should bear its cost, instead of transferring it to posterity; and if this more equitable maxim had been observed, France would not have engaged in the American war of independence. Not only in a financial point of view, but also on political considerations, that war was most imprudent on the part of Louis XVI. Its result is well known. Thirteen dependencies of the British crown repudiated its authority, and at the point of the sword won their independence. The hero of this revolution was Washington, who bears a more unsullied name than any other in history. To achieve this enfranchisement, the interposition of

they contrived in a great measure to evade. Bouillé, after mentioning other instances, says, 'The princes of the blood, for example, who enjoyed among them from twenty-four to twenty-five millions yearly, paid for their two-twenths only 183,000 livres instead of 2,400,000. On this subject I will mention an anecdote tending to confirm the existence of this abuse. The Duke of Orleans, who presided over the bureau (committee) to which I belonged at the Assembly of the Notables, said to me one day after a deliberation in which we had considered and approved the establishment of provincial administrations, "Are you aware, sir, that this pleasantry will cost me at least 300,000 livres a-year?" "How is that, monseigneur?" I asked. "At present I arrange with the intendants," he replied; "and I pay pretty nearly what I like. The provincial administrations, on the contrary, will make me pay what is strictly due."—*Memoirs*, p. 41.

France was not needed ; but from blind animosity to Great Britain—not assuredly from any love of practical freedom—her government eagerly proffered it. Then the soldiers of a despotic monarchy mingled and fought side by side with republicans on an insurrectionary soil, and failed not to imbibe the sentiments and spirit of their new comrades. They and their officers returned to France full of enthusiasm in the cause of liberty, and flushed with the glorious contest in which they had assisted to secure its triumph. The intoxication was indeed general, and even the court partook of it. Lafayette, who had been a volunteer in the American service, was the object of extravagant eulogy ; and nothing was heard in the saloons of the palace but dissertations on the rights of man, and exclamations on the noble ardour inspired by the fire of patriotism. Such an event as the American revolution would, under any circumstances, have operated with prodigious effect on the people of France, situated as they were at the time ; but when the court itself set the example, and it became the fashion in the highest circles to sound the praises of revolt, a perfect delirium prevailed, and the fermentation reached an extraordinary height.* The infatuation of the deluded monarch and those around him was in no instance more strikingly exemplified ; for to the previous aspirations, sufficiently intense throughout the nation, came now the additional stimulus of a longing to imitate the example so happily set across the Atlantic.

Louis turned from Necker to Fleury, from Fleury to D'Ormesson, and found no solace in either.† At length, in 1783, a minister was found, who appeared to the court as an angel of

* Madame Campan gives a lively picture of the reception given to Franklin. 'He appeared at court,' she says, 'in the costume of an American farmer: his lank unpowdered hair, round hat, and drab coat, contrasted oddly with the embroidered and bespangled dresses, the full-blown and perfumed perukes, of the courtiers of Versailles. This novelty charmed the dizzy heads of all the French women. Elegant fêtes were given in honour of one who united the distinction of a great natural philosopher with the patriotic virtues which had prompted him to embrace the noble part of an apostle of liberty. I was present at one of these fêtes, in which the most beautiful of three hundred women was selected to affix on the gray hairs of the American philosopher a crown of laurel, and on his cheeks a couple of kisses. Even in the palace of Versailles, at the exhibition of Sevres porcelain, under the very eyes of the king, a medallion of Franklin was sold bearing this inscription—"Eripuit calo fulmen sceptrumque tyrannis"—("He tore the thunderbolt from the skies, and the sceptre from tyrants").'—Vol. i. p. 233.

† Fleury had gained a reputation for practical ability. It was said that none knew better than he *how to break the neck of business*. But he proved utterly incapable as a finance minister. D'Ormesson's principal recommendation was his own strict integrity. This was actually made the subject of ridicule at court. 'When one asked another to dinner, the latter would ask, "But have you got a good cook?" "No, unhappily," the first replied, "but he is *very honest*." Another said—"I have got a most vicious horse I want to tame, and I have sent in search of a trainer *whose probity is proof against all temptations*." In a country where frivolity exercises such influence, this sneering language was prejudicial to the conduct of affairs by D'Ormesson.'—Weber, *Memoirs*, vol. i. p. 150.

deliverance. This was Calonne, who to an incomparable suavity of manner, and great fertility in expedients, joined a cool audacity which is without parallel. As Necker had preached economy, so he upheld the contrary doctrine of profusion. He enraptured the queen by his magnificent schemes; he bought for her, during a season of intense suffering among the people, the splendid palace and domain of Saint Cloud, which then belonged to the Duke of Orleans. The whole court was radiant with smiles, for Calonne promised all that was most coveted by its volatile inmates—money and pleasure. The king himself shook off the gloom that had long oppressed him, and was for a short period of his life really happy. Maurepas was now dead, and he had fallen completely under the influence of his wife.* That princess was still in the flower of her age, beautiful, fond of frivolous amusements, but ambitious withal, and possessing something of her mother's spirit. She lent a ready ear to Calonne's agreeable propositions, and congratulated the king on the fortunate exchange he had made for Turgot and Necker. But the pleasing dream was soon over. Calonne had for a time contrived to seduce the imaginations and satisfy the doubts of capitalists, and so been enabled to go on contracting loans; but at length all credit was at an end, and this resource failed. The crisis had at last arrived which Necker had struggled to avert, and Calonne recklessly to precipitate. The latter, however, preserved all his coolness and presence of mind in the emergency. The idea of the States-General was abhorrent to him as a spendthrift minister; but to impose fresh taxes, the semblance at least of a national concurrence was essential to him. Calling to mind a precedent set by Henry IV. and Cardinal Richelieu, accordingly, he adopted the expedient of convoking an assembly of notables, selected by the king from among the high nobility, clergy, and magistracy. He judged that to such a tribunal he might confidently appeal for condonation and support. He was, however, egregiously mistaken. The notables, who met at Versailles on the 29th January 1787, were appalled at the balance-sheet he presented to them. Seventy millions sterling borrowed

* Louis, from the inherent weakness of his character, naturally fell under guidance: his personal habits also unfitted him to rule. He cared only for hunting and working as a mechanic. 'The king unfortunately exhibited,' says Madame Campan, 'too strong a taste for the mechanic arts. Masonry and smith-work pleased him to such a degree, that he admitted to his private apartments a young locksmith, with whom he forged keys, locks, &c.; his hands, blackened by his labour, were frequently in my presence a subject of observation, and even of reproach, on the part of the queen, who desired other amusements for the king.' The name of this locksmith was Gamin, who afterwards accused his master of an atrocious crime, for which he received a pension. 'The king was good, indulgent, timid, curious, fond of sleep,' Gamin said to me (Abbé Soulavie, *Mémoires of the Reign of Louis XVI.*, vol. ii. p. 191); 'he passionately loved working as a smith, and hid himself from the queen and the court to file and forge with me. To set up his anvil and mine, unknown to all the world, it was necessary to use a thousand stratagems, a narration of which would be endless.'

within a few years, and an annual deficiency of seven millions sterling! Such was the fearful statement he had to make. The notables refused to listen to him, being more particularly incited thereto by the bishops, who were incensed against Calonne by his desire to subject ecclesiastical property to taxation; and though he maintained a long and courageous struggle, he was obliged at length to give way, and retire from the scene, followed by the execrations of the people. His most active opponent, Brienne, Archbishop of Toulouse, was, by the influence of the queen, appointed to succeed him, to whom the notables were more complaisant. They sanctioned the proposal of a land-tax and stamp-duty, and the abolition of certain feudal services. Edicts were framed in accordance, but the parliament refused to register those relative to the land-tax and stamp-duty. A freedom and violence of language was used on this occasion which was wholly unexampled. The profligacy and extravagance of the court were strongly denounced, an accurate statement of the public revenue was authoritatively demanded, and a resolution passed that the parliament had no power to authorise the levy of taxes, but that to the States-General alone such right belonged. This may be considered an act of desperation, when, finding itself unequal to the conflict, the parliament hoped to interest the nation at large in its quarrel. It gave the first impetus to a cry which soon became universal and importunate.

But the Archbishop of Toulouse was a bold and resolute man. He forthwith summoned the parliament to Versailles, and caused the two edicts to be registered in a bed of justice. Upon its return to Paris, the parliament recorded a formal protest against this proceeding, and demanded an examination of Calonne's accounts, which so provoked the archbishop, that, by a decree in council, he banished the refractory body to Troyes. Now began that fever of high excitement which was to rage so long, and to be cooled only in blood. The people sided universally with the parliament, for in their eyes opposition to the government was always meritorious. In its attempts to resist and curb the crown, its views were partly selfish and partly patriotic. Whilst it wished to secure for the nation some effective barriers against the exercise of arbitrary power, it contemplated that the principal check would devolve upon itself, and thereby its own importance be increased. It had little conception of the storm it was assisting to raise.

Meanwhile a compromise was negotiated between the archbishop and some of the principal members of the parliament. The former consented to withdraw the two objectionable edicts, and to substitute one for a loan of four hundred and forty millions of livres (nearly twenty millions sterling), to be distributed over a space of four years, at the end of which time the States-General were to be

assembled. Upon this understanding the parliament was recalled to Paris, and on the 20th September 1787, the king presented in person the edict for the progressive loan. He was received with an ominous silence, which was broken by the Duke of Orleans rising to inquire whether it was a bed of justice or a free deliberation. 'It is a royal sitting,' Lamoignon, keeper of the seals, replied. Thereupon several members proceeded to declaim against the edict, who were at length stopped by the king ordering the registration of his own authority. On his retirement, the parliament entered a declaration on its registers that it had taken no part in the enrolment of the decree. Determined to display unrelaxed energy in this conjuncture, the archbishop commanded a deputation of the parliament to attend the next day at Versailles, with its registers, in order that this declaration might be expunged. The Duke of Orleans was again exiled to his estate of Rainci, and two other members were arrested by virtue of *lettres de cachet*, and thrown into prison. The parliament remonstrated; the deputation which waited on the king demanded in firm language the release of the members, and the recall of the Duke of Orleans. The king met the application with a sharp rebuke, and directed the obnoxious entry to be erased in his presence. Thus was the ominous contest continued, and the popular agitation kept alive.

The parliament was far from being intimidated. On the contrary, it was the first to commence aggressive hostilities. On the 4th January 1788, it passed a decree annulling arbitrary arrests (*lettres de cachet*), and recalling its exiled members. The king cancelled this decree by an order in council, and the parliament reaffirmed it. The minister and the court were exasperated to the highest degree. They resolved to get rid of the parliament altogether, to circumscribe its judicial jurisdiction by the erection of co-ordinate courts, and to annihilate its political influence by transferring the privilege of registering edicts to a plenary court composed of the princes, peers, and others appointed by the king. This plan, which was conceived by Lamoignon, keeper of the seals, was intended to be kept a profound secret; but D'Espremenil, a member of the parliament, contrived to procure a copy of the proposed decree from the printer's office, and hastily calling his colleagues together, laid it before them. Instantly resolutions were passed declaratory of the sole right of the nation to vote taxes through the organ of the States-General, of the inviolability of the parliament and its members, and of the illegality of arbitrary arrests. The day after these resolutions had been adopted, an officer at the head of a file of soldiers entered the assembly, and after a considerable delay, caused by the president refusing to point out to him the objects of his pursuit, arrested D'Espremenil, and another member, by name Goislart de Monsalbert, whom he conducted to prison through an immense concourse of people, who

hailed them with repeated acclamations.* Three days afterwards, on the 8th May, the king held a bed of justice, and enforced the registration of the decree.

Thus was the king committed to an open conflict of authority with the only body which stood between him and the nation. In the inflamed state of the public mind no policy could have been more injudicious. The Archbishop of Toulouse was wholly unequal to the crisis he had provoked. Tumults broke out in almost every quarter of the kingdom, the courts of law and the provincial parliaments issued solemn protests, and even the clergy remonstrated against the abolition of a body which had always proved hostile to their interests. Having been convoked by the archbishop with the view of obtaining a subsidy from them, they answered by demanding the suppression of the plenary court and the convocation of the States-General. The minister at first showed a bold front, and fulminated sentences of exile against the opposing parliaments; but the spirit of resistance was too universal, for the troops also were infected, and refused to act against the populace in several towns; and he was obliged to yield to the storm. He retired, leaving things in a much worse condition than when he rashly undertook the task of composing them. His downfall was the signal of serious riots in Paris; he was burnt in effigy by the mob, and the tumult was not suppressed until the third day. His disgrace, however, was soothed by promotion to the archbishopric of Sens, and his elevation to a seat in the sacred College of Cardinals. On the 8th August, Necker was reinstated in the ministry, and a proclamation issued summoning the States-General to meet on the 1st May 1789.

No other alternative remained. However loath to appeal to that formidable assemblage, in which the sovereignty of the nation was vaguely held to be seated, at the present moment the king and the court almost regarded it in the light of a relief. Every expedient had been tried, and failed; the nobles, the clergy, and the parliament had all shown themselves indifferent or hostile, and the tiers-etat, of which such horror and dread had been entertained, now appeared the sole resource. As the higher orders refused to abate a jot of their exclusive privileges, or to consent to the least sacrifice, nothing remained but to call in the aid of the nation itself. Of this the king was now fully sensible, and under this impression he desired that the representation should be real, and not illusory. From the long time which had elapsed since the last States-General had sat, the greatest uncertainty prevailed as to their exact constitution and the mode of their deliberations. That they consisted of three distinct orders—the nobility, clergy,

* This extraordinary scene is related with great dramatic effect in Sallier's *Annales Francoises*, and quoted in the *Eclaircissements Historiques* appended to Bailly's *Memoirs*, letter L, vol. i. p. 469.

and commonalty—was undoubted; but the number of delegates, and the manner of voting, were involved in obscurity. It was authenticated that in 1614 the orders had voted separately—that is to say, in three chambers; the sanction of all three being requisite to the validity of any statute. But in earlier times, it was contended that they had congregated in one common hall, and voted *per capita*, by heads. In the darkness surrounding the subject, writers were invited by government itself to investigate and decide the debateable points, which brought forth a variety of disquisitions, wherein for the most part the right of the body of the nation, or the tiers-etat, to have a paramount representation was stoutly argued and upheld: and this not so much on the ground of precedent, as on the strength of first principles—the original sovereignty of communities from whom all power flows, and is held in delegation, and on the overwhelming preponderance in number and intelligence of the tiers-etat. The most celebrated of these productions were the Essays on the Tiers-Etat of the Abbé Sieyes, and on the States-General of M. d'Entraigues. In the former, Sieyes propounded the question: 'What is the tiers-etat?' and he answered, 'Nothing.' 'What ought it to be?' 'Everything.' Such, indeed, was the prevailing opinion, and, it may be added, determination.

In truth, the question was one that must naturally be decided, not with reference to what had occurred in dark and barbarous ages, but to the actual state of the country. Moreover, precedents were conflicting. Instances might be adduced in which the clergy had not appeared as an order, and others in which the States-General voted not in orders, but by provinces. It was therefore a legitimate field of inquiry, in which the dictates of expediency and reason ought to prevail. But the parliament of Paris, hitherto so strenuous in opposition to authority, now took the alarm; and foreseeing in the triumph of the tiers-etat its own eclipse, solemnly declared against any constitution of the States-General other than that of 1614. By that step it at once forfeited all the popularity it had acquired in its struggle with the crown. On the other hand, the States of Dauphiné spontaneously assembled, and, despite the prohibition of the king, asserted in a joint resolution that the tiers-etat should be at least equal in number to the nobility and clergy combined. This authoritative declaration gave additional boldness to the advocates of the popular cause, who already began to act in associations or *clubs*, and to agitate opinion through various ramifications. The whole country was deeply moved by this important controversy; for upon its settlement depended the momentous question at issue between the nation and its governors. To reconcile differences, if it were possible, and, above all, to throw upon the higher orders the odium of condemning the popular claims, Necker advised the king to consult

an assembly of notables, the same who had been previously called together. These found little difficulty in solving the problem. Except by one bureau, or committee, over which Monsieur, the king's eldest brother, afterwards Louis XVIII.,* presided, it was unanimously determined that the constitution and forms of 1614 should be adhered to; that is to say, the tiers-etat should be reduced to a nullity by the two predominant orders. Nevertheless, when this decision was reviewed by the king in council, Necker prevailed upon him to disregard it, and adopt the counter principle of doubling the tiers-etat. This resolution was founded upon reasons set forth in the preamble, one of which was 'the opinion of several public writers'—an acknowledgment of deference to the force of argument very rare on the part of governments. It was accordingly ordained that the States-General should consist of at least one thousand deputies, and that those of the tiers-etat should equal in number those of the nobility and clergy combined. The question of voting by orders or by heads was left undecided. Necker has been blamed for leaving this material point open; but it may well be doubted whether he did not exercise an involuntary discretion in forbearing to prejudge it. It was absolutely necessary to determine the number of the deputies, but it might be properly left to them, after meeting, to arrange in what way they would deliberate and vote. And even if the king had preliminarily declared in favour of the division into orders, it is indisputable that the tiers-etat would not the less, and with equal pertinacity, have contended for the amalgamation.

If the antiquated form of these States-General were at all to be adhered to, the course pursued by the government was imposed upon it by circumstances which were beyond its control. But seeing that the organisation of that assemblage was a matter of dispute, that the mode of proceeding was uncertain and conjectural, that the whole was a mere tradition buried in the oblivion of nearly two centuries, Necker would have acted more wisely if, instead of resuscitating an extinguished and unwieldy institution, he had obeyed his own prepossessions, and at once convoked, what he afterwards vainly strove to establish, a parliament such as that of Great Britain. It was clearly competent for him to have done so at this period, and it would have then fully satisfied

* Louis XVIII. was by far the most intelligent of the royal brothers, and had early manifested considerable ability. The Prince de Montbarey relates a curious anecdote on this subject. A deputation from the provinces arrived at Versailles to present an address of congratulation to Louis XV., and afterwards complimented the three sons of the dauphin, then children. The speaker of the deputation bestowed upon them, of course, the most lavish praises, and among the rest extolled the eldest, afterwards Louis XVI., for his precocious talents. The boy, with a modesty and simplicity which gave promise of his subsequent character, interrupted him by saying, 'Sir, I am much obliged to you, but I am not the clever one: it is my brother Provence.'

the wishes of the French nation.* To compose the States-General, the whole machinery was to be created. Everything was novel. The holders of fiefs alone were strictly entitled to sit in the order of nobility, yet all its members were now made eligible. The order of the clergy had been limited to prelates and abbots, but it was now to embrace the whole ecclesiastical body. The tiers-etat itself bore no resemblance to that of the old States-General; it was to be elected in *bailliages*, mural or territorial circumscriptions varying in extent and population, with no restriction as to qualification. Thus, under an old name, it was a new invention; and it might as readily have been moulded into the form of a British parliament, as into that of a heterogeneous convocation such as that of the States-General. That Necker would have been thwarted by the court if he had been bold enough to recommend this innovation, is very certain; for in the incongruous nature of their composition, it placed its hopes of paralysing the action of the States-General. Nevertheless, if he had persisted, he would probably have carried his point at this precise moment, and thereby procured a moderate and beneficial reform in place of that sweeping revolution to which he himself fell so early a victim.

As it was, however, the States-General were convoked in the three orders of nobility, clergy, and commonalty. France witnessed, for the first time in her history, the phenomenon of a general election. The tumult and excitement were prodigious. Already two parties were in antagonism, for the audacious pretensions of the tiers-etat had scared the nobility and parliamentarians into union, and they struggled for mastery in the electoral assemblies with the popular leaders. The clergy exercised but little influence outside their own sphere; the court gazed upon the scene with indifference, careless which side might gain the victory, for it scarcely knew from which most danger to itself might be apprehended. In the end, the popular party triumphed over all adversaries, and to the tiers-etat scarcely a single deputy entertaining what may be called conservative opinions was elected, whereas in both the other orders several advocates of the popular cause were nominated. On the whole, the returns were as follow:—The order of the nobility was composed of 242 nobles, and 28 members of the parliaments; the order of the clergy of 48 archbishops and bishops, 35 abbots and deans, and 208 parish priests; the tiers-etat of 2 clergymen, 12 nobles, 18 city magistrates, 102 members of the bailliage courts, 112 lawyers,

* This is incidentally stated by Bailly himself, when describing the first assembly of the electors of Paris. 'It was then the general impression,' he says, 'that the clergy ought not to form an order, but that the bishops and dignified clergy should be united with the nobility, and the inferior clergy with the tiers-etat. This arrangement was precisely that of the two chambers afterwards proposed by Mounier, and rejected.'—*Mem.* vol. i. p. 17.

16 doctors, and 216 traders and cultivators—in all 1139: nobles, 270; clergy, 291; commons, 578.

The meeting of the States-General was postponed to the 4th May 1789. Versailles was appointed as the place of convocation. Necker would have preferred Paris, but he was overruled by the court. It was judged that the deputies would be more under influence in a town like Versailles, which derived all its importance from the residence of the court, and was peopled by its retainers. Some time previous to the day fixed, they began to assemble. Coming from distant parts of the country, they were for the most part strangers to each other; but the members of the tiers-etat sought intercommunication in clubs, which were as numerous as the provinces, until the Breton Club absorbed all the rest. Every effort was used by the different parties to secure and multiply adherents. As the eventful period approached, which was universally felt to be one pregnant with mighty changes, it became more apparent to the privileged orders that they must make common cause with the crown. They now saw reason to repent their former contumacy and the quarrels they had maintained among themselves, in which the people had been stimulated to interfere, and thus to test their power. They viewed the tiers-etat as their natural and most formidable enemy, and cordially combined against it. The saloons of Madame de Polignac offered them a place of rendezvous, where their alliance with the court was negotiated and cemented. D'Espremenil, the hero of the parliamentary opposition, was drawn into this vortex, and converted from his heterodox notions touching the royal prerogative—a sufficient proof of the inconsiderate selfishness of that resistance. To humiliate and abash the commons, it was determined that the costumes and ceremonies used in opening the States-General in 1614 should be exactly imitated. The nobles were to be adorned in purple velvet, cloth of gold, and plumes of feathers; the clergy to be arrayed in their gorgeous vestments; the commons to wear black stuff cloaks, after the fashion of the lawyers in the sixteenth century. To impress them yet more effectually with the sense of their inferiority, they were received at the palace in a different manner from the other orders. Whilst the nobility and clergy were admitted to the cabinet of the monarch, they were left to wait in an antechamber, and were subsequently hurried in a file past the throne amid the sneers of the courtiers, and with a contemptuous freezing formality.* Far from being overawed by such treatment, they were only the more profoundly incensed, and viewed with increased indignation the luxury and magnificence of the court, which to them, simple burghers and husbandmen, appeared outrageous, and even sinful. 'How is all

* Rabant St Etienne, vol. i. p. 29. He was himself a member of the tiers-etat.

this pomp supported?' they asked of each other. 'Out of the sweat of the people!' was answered in accents of wrath. A feeling of inveterate hatred against the court was thus engendered, directed more particularly against the queen, who, being known to guide the king, was generally deemed the instigator of the studied insults heaped on the representatives of the nation.*

Meanwhile a dreadful catastrophe occurred in Paris, which gave rise to mutual recriminations. A paper-hanging manufacturer in the suburb St Antoine, named Reveillon, was reported to have lowered the wages of his workmen, and said that bread was too good for such rascals. A furious mob assembled in the Palais-Royal, carrying an effigy of Reveillon, which was hanged on a gibbet, after the ceremony of a formal condemnation to death. Amongst the concourse was observed an immense number of strangers—men of the most ferocious aspect, who took part in

* From her first arrival in France, at the age of fifteen, Marie-Antoinette had been an object of dislike both to the court and to the people. Even the mind of her young husband was so poisoned against her, that until some time after he ascended the throne, he refrained from all marital intercourse with her. She was continually accused both of criminal levity, and of intrigues in the interest of Austria. During the first years of her marriage she lived in great unhappiness and restraint. The impatience she manifested at the strict etiquette observed in the court of France, which stopped her at every step she made, assisted also to render her distasteful to the formalists who filled it. This etiquette was of an incredible minuteness, and enthralled her from her rising in the morning till her getting into bed at night. The following quotation from Madame Campan may give some idea of it:—

'The dressing of the princess was the very pink of etiquette: everything in it was strictly regulated. The lady of honour and the lady of the wardrobe, both, if they were present together, assisted by the first attendant and two ordinary attendants, performed the principal service; but there were distinctions between them. The lady of the wardrobe handed the petticoat and the gown. The lady of honour poured out water to wash the hands and put on the chemise. When a princess of the royal family was present at the dressing, the lady of honour yielded to her the latter function, but did not yield it directly to the princesses of the blood; in such a case, the lady of honour returned the chemise to the first *femme-de-chambre*, who delivered it to the princess of the blood. Each of these ladies scrupulously observed these usages, as having the character of rights. It happened one winter's morning that the dauphiness was waiting to receive her chemise, which I held ready unfolded, when the lady of honour entered, hastened to take off her gloves, and took the chemise from my hands. At this moment a knock is heard at the door; it is opened, and the Duchess of Orleans enters. She removes her gloves, and advances to take the chemise; but the lady of honour must not deliver it to her. She returns it to me, and I present it to the duchess. Again a knock is heard; it is Madame, the Countess of Provence: the Duchess of Orleans surrenders to her the chemise. All this time the queen is standing with her arms crossed upon her breast shivering with cold. Madame perceives her unpleasant position; and contenting herself with throwing aside her handkerchief, and retaining her gloves, she puts on the chemise, and as she does so, knocks down the queen's head-dress. The latter smiled, to disguise her vexation, but she muttered several times between her teeth, *Detestable! How tiresome!*'—Vol. i. pp. 97, 98. In the following page, Madame Campan very sensibly remarks, 'This etiquette, which, in the domestic life of our princes, had led them to have themselves treated as divinities, made them in their public life victims of any delusion. In the palace of Versailles, Marie-Antoinette found a multitude of established and revered usages which appeared to her insufferable.'

every scene of disorder, and were long the terror of Paris, under the appellation of *brigands*. The night was passed in uproar and debauchery, and in the morning (28th April) the crowd moved towards the premises of Reveillon, which were guarded by a few patrol. These were unable to resist the assault of the populace, who carried the building by storm, and gutted it from top to bottom. Two regiments of French and Swiss guards then came up, followed by cavalry and artillery. It was in vain the insurgents were ordered to disperse; they replied by volleys of stones and bricks. At length the word was given to the troops to fire, and a dreadful slaughter ensued. Before the infuriated people were finally defeated, 200 of their number were killed, and 300 wounded, the soldiers also suffering a loss of 12 killed, and 80 wounded.* The blame of this terrible event was charged on the authorities, and through them on the court, as it was said that the intentions of the mob were openly proclaimed the day before, and no precautions were taken to preserve the peace. On the contrary, the disturbance was allowed to proceed, and gain a dangerous height before any measures were taken to suppress it, and then a barbarous vengeance was wreaked. The court retorted the accusation, and attributed the whole riot to the Duke of Orleans, alleging, what was indeed true, that money had been freely distributed amongst the crowd, and that some of the wounded insurgents confessed they had received a sum of twelve livres each. The Duke of Orleans was at this time elevated, almost in spite of himself, to be the head of the popular party; and although he was a weak and dissolute man, incapable of leading a party, or achieving any great result, the most extravagant projects were imputed to him. He was seriously believed to aim at the dethronement of the king, and his own nomination as lieutenant-general of the kingdom. However true or false such imputations might be, it is difficult to conceive how he could advance his cause by instigating a popular outbreak of so deplorable a character. In the absence of any proof implicating either party—and it was sought for with all the eagerness of hatred—it is more rational to conclude that the affair was the offspring of popular exasperation, provoked by a rumour peculiarly fitted to arouse the passions of the working-classes.

Under these sad auspices, the scene was now to open in which, from distant skirmishing, the parties were to meet in close conflict. The day previous to the opening of the States-General was devoted to an imposing solemnity. The king, accompanied by his queen and the royal family, and followed by all the ministers of

* This is the computation given by Bertrand de Molleville in his 'Annals of the French Revolution,' vol. i. p. 29; but it is proper to state that it far exceeds the account given by other authorities. Bailly even states that he was not aware any lives had been sacrificed; which, if his character for honesty were less undoubted, might be deemed a culpable glossing of the truth.

state, and the three orders of the States-General, went in procession from the church of Notre Dame to that of St Louis, where high mass was celebrated. The clergy preceded in all the pomp of sacerdotal decorations, the nobility followed in their rich and glittering attire, and the commons brought up the rear in the modest and sombre garb prescribed to them. Yet, though the least dazzling in appearance, they were regarded with much greater interest than their bedizened colleagues of the higher orders. The spectators were innumerable: they had come from every part of France to witness the spectacle. An exuberant joy was the prevailing sentiment, softened by a deep emotion. It was a sight, in truth, to move the heart—the virtuous and benignant monarch, leading by the hand his beautiful and gracious queen, ushering to the solemn services of religion the chosen of his people, to hallow the inauguration of a national council revived from the dust of centuries! What a subject of reflection to the gazing multitude, impressed with the novelty and grandeur of the occasion! On that day all was propitious; the sun shone with unclouded lustre, and hope was buoyant with auguries of happiness and regeneration.

CHAPTER I.

STATES-GENERAL—CAPTURE OF THE BASTILLE— 5TH MAY TO 14TH JULY 1789.

On the day following this solemn inauguration, the 5th May 1789, the States-General were formally opened: the formalities of 1614 were strictly observed. The king, the court, the clergy, and nobility, entered at the grand door of the building, whilst the commons were kept waiting until all had taken their seats, and were then admitted only by a side door. At one end of the hall sat Louis XVI. on his throne, and by his side the queen, Marie-Antoinette.* In front,

* The personal appearance of Marie-Antoinette has been differently described. The two following extracts, from competent authorities, give perhaps the most accurate idea of it. 'Her personal charms, which Burke has exaggerated, consisted more in her air of dignity, the nobleness of her figure, and the grace of her deportment, which all bespoke the queen, rather than in her features, which wanted sweetness and regularity. She had weak or inflamed eyes; but her complexion, which was brilliant, her youth, the richness of her dress, in which she showed exquisite taste, struck all who saw her.'—*Waxall's Memoirs*, vol. i. p. 115.

'Marie-Antoinette of Austria was more dazzling than beautiful. Viewed separately, her features had nothing remarkable; but as a whole, they were most agreeable. The word *charming* expresses the effect most appropriately. No woman ever carried her head better, so that in all her movements were grace and dignity. Her step, light and noble, recalled the expression of Virgil: *Incessu patuit dea*—("By her gait the goddess was revealed").'—*Senac de Meilhan, Portraits et Caracteres*, p. 74.

on the right and left of the throne, were ranged the two orders of the clergy and nobility. Above and around, in the galleries, were the ladies and gentlemen of the court. In the background were the deputies of the people, who, despite the signs and menaces of the Marquis de Brézé, master of the ceremonies, persisted, like the nobles and clergy, in remaining covered. The king delivered a speech, in which he expressed his gratification at meeting the representatives of the nation, his confidence in their good intentions, and his hopes of amelioration from their labours; intimated the existence of a great deficiency in the finances, rebuked the spirit of innovation abroad, and concluded by proclaiming himself the first friend of his people, ready to make any sacrifice for their welfare. After he had finished, Barentin, the keeper of the seals, pronounced a discourse, in which he alluded to the subject of the separation of the orders. He stated that his majesty was willing the three orders should combine, in order to vote taxes; but that on other questions they must deliberate apart. This was an ingenious arrangement, since the way would be smoothed for grants of money; but to measures of reform the obstacle of a triple legislature would still be interposed. Necker followed him in a long oration, in which he exposed the state of the finances, and adroitly parried the question of the separation, which excited murmurs among the commons, who expected from him, as the popular minister, a declaration in favour of the amalgamation.

They were determined to carry that essential point nevertheless. Upon it obviously depended their predominance or their nullity. Their superiority of number was vain and useless, if their decisions might be reversed by hostile minorities. Hence, on the ensuing day, they assembled in the hall of the States, which, from its 'greater size, was appropriated to them, and awaited in inaction the junction of the two other orders. These, meanwhile, had met in separate chambers, and proceeded to verify the powers of their members. This verification the tiers-etat argued should be made in common, even if a subsequent separation took place, inasmuch as the genuineness of the respective delegations was matter of general interest. But the clergy and nobility demurred, alleging that, as the orders were distinct, so should be the verification. Among both, however, was a strong minority on this question; and in the former the separate verification was voted by only 133 to 114, and in the latter by 188 to 114. Thus there was a large infusion of popular members in both of the privileged orders, whilst amongst the commons an almost perfect unanimity prevailed. The latter continued to meet day by day, taking no step, or even assuming any title, and contenting themselves with messages, inviting the clergy and nobility to join them, and commence their labours for the good of the nation. The clergy showed themselves disposed to enter into a compro-

mise, and proposed conciliatory conferences. The nobility refused to appoint commissioners, and evinced a firm resolution to stand by their privileges. The clergy were actuated by a different spirit; and, to keep open a chance of accommodation, suspended the verification which they had commenced. Several days passed in this state of inactivity, until the nobility at length consented to appoint commissioners to attend the conferences. An arrangement was proposed by which the verification of the powers should be made by a committee selected jointly from the three orders. This suggestion was indignantly repudiated by the nobility, who passed a resolution of unalterable adherence to the principle of a separate verification, at least for this session, whatever course might be adopted in future. The conferences were consequently suspended.

It was already the 27th May. Three weeks had elapsed, and the first step preliminary to organisation had not been taken. The public discontent was loudly expressed. A leader stepped from the ranks, and conducted the tiers-etat in its emergency. This was Mirabeau, a man of extraordinary talents, eloquence, and energy. He was by birth a noble, but the irregularities of his life had caused him to be discarded by his family. He had passed several years in prison, and burned for revenge both on the crown and on the order to which he himself belonged. Being rejected as a candidate by the nobility of his native province of Provence, he had procured his election for Aix as a member of the tiers-etat. He became its most formidable tribune. He now proposed that a solemn deputation should be sent to the clergy, calling upon them, '*in the name of the God of peace, and of the public interest, to join the commons in the hall of the States, and consult upon the means of concord so necessary to the welfare of the nation.*' The clergy were greatly moved by this adjuration, and many of them started to obey the summons; but were stopped by the majority, who ruled that they should first deliberate on the subject. The commons sent a second message, to the effect that, without wishing to hurry the decision of the clergy, they would sit even through the night awaiting their arrival. Eventually, however, an adjournment took place till the following day, when the king resolved to interfere in the contest. He sent a communication to each of the three orders, urging them to renew their conciliatory conferences in the presence of his keeper of the seals. The mediation of the king was accepted; and Necker, in his name, propounded a scheme whereby the verification was to be conducted separately, but the result communicated to all the orders, which should, by joint commissions, settle points of controversy, or refer them to the king in case of dissensions. The commons were spared the necessity of rejecting this plan, which would have exposed them to the charge of obstinate perverseness, although

it was highly unfavourable to their pretensions, by the stubbornness of the nobility, who accepted it, clogged with so many reservations, that its character of a compromise was destroyed. The conferences were once more broken up, and the nobility reaffirmed all their previous resolutions.

Inaction had been hitherto the policy of the commons, which denomination they had now formally assumed; but the time had arrived for decisive measures. Mirabeau concerted with Sieyes* the course to pursue. The daring resolution was taken to proceed without the orders of the nobility and clergy, if upon a last invitation they failed to attend in the hall of the States. Accordingly, on the 10th of June, Sieyes appeared in the tribune, and, supporting the proposition by a series of inductive reasons, submitted it to his colleagues, who hailed it with vociferous applause. Cries were uttered of 'Allow them but an hour!' Nevertheless, the call of names was deferred for two days. It was then commenced, and the returns of the several bailliages were examined and verified in rotation. This occupied three days, during which period nearly twenty members of the clergy appeared, and produced their credentials. Then arose the question of the title to be borne by the assembly which had thus constituted itself the sole depositary of the national representation. After several suggestions had been made and negatived, that of NATIONAL ASSEMBLY was finally agreed upon; but a violent discussion ensuing, which lasted till late at night of the 16th June, it was only on the following morning that the tiers-etat took upon itself that imposing designation, by a majority of 491 to 90.† Sieyes drew up a manifesto in justification of this act, which was adopted, published, and widely circulated. It excited the greatest enthusiasm throughout the nation, which saw, with equal delight and astonishment, the unexpected firmness and intrepidity of its representatives. The

* It was with great difficulty the Abbé Sieyes had obtained a seat in the States-General. He was not returned in the order of the clergy, to which he belonged, and the electors of the tiers-etat of Paris had resolved not to choose either priests or nobles. Happily this resolution, through the inadvertence of Bailly, then secretary of the assembly of electors, had not been entered on the minutes, and at the last moment Sieyes was nominated a deputy, after a most violent opposition. He was the last named of the twenty deputies apportioned to Paris *intra muros*.

† Bailly observes upon this act: 'I may remark, that the place of general meeting being occupied by the commons, was of great assistance in justifying this manner of regarding and constituting themselves. Where the States-General ought to be, there the commons were; they summoned the two other orders; the wrong was with the absent, whose default made no change in the nature of the assembly. It is thus that the physical always and everywhere ministers to the intellectual, and that this incident of locality served to originate the idea of these great political and legislative movements.'—*Memoirs*, vol. i. p. 149. Bouillé enumerates, among the numerous blunders committed by Necker, this 'inadvertence' of leaving the tiers-etat in possession of the hall of the States-General, 'thereby affording it a pretext to invite the other orders to come and join it.'—Note to p. 68. The circumstance was no doubt of great importance.

Assembly lost not a moment in exercising its newly-arrogated powers. On the same day, the 17th June, it passed resolutions affirming the indivisibility of the legislative power, and the illegality of existing taxes, but sanctioning their collection provisionally, or at least until the Assembly was dissolved, placing the public debt under the safeguard of French integrity, and appointing a committee to devise measures for the relief of the famishing people.

This was the first decisive encroachment on the royal authority, and if not checked, it must necessarily lead to the dreaded preponderance of the popular power. Everything depended on the prudence and energy of the step to be taken by the king. A plan had been already submitted to him by Necker, indeed previous to the meeting of the States-General, which, if adopted earlier, might have proved acceptable and efficacious in lulling the spirit of innovation. With his usual irresolution, Louis XVI. had hesitated and delayed to act upon it. This plan was, in effect, to take the initiative, and of his own accord grant a constitution to France upon the basis of that of England. Necker represented to him that his power under such a constitution would be quite as great as he himself would ever wish to exercise; and that, as sacrifices were to be made, such a compromise was advisable whilst yet practicable. The king was personally agreeable to the project, but dared not embrace it without hearing other counsels. These were ever destined to be fatal to him. The idea of a royal declaration was approved, whereby the king was to make a spontaneous gift of boons to the nation; but a constitution such as the British was at once repudiated. All parties were combined against it—the pure royalists, the nobles, and the clergy;* the latter were especially hostile, because they feared to be extinguished as an order in the State. Necker's plan, therefore, was completely subverted. A council was held at Marly, a country residence some distance from Versailles, whither the king was drawn; and there, in the absence of Necker, a scheme of action was agreed upon, which certainly had the recommendation of vigour, but betrayed that remarkable fatuity and blindness to the temper and signs of the times from which the court never emerged. It was always beguiled by hallucinations. In assembling the States-General, it had confidently relied upon holding the balance between the divided orders, to keep them poised against each other; so as by means of the tiers-etat to overawe the nobility and clergy, and through them to curb the former if it attempted to trespass beyond the permitted bounds. In truth, its

* 'The party which professed to be the defender of the throne spoke with infinite disdain of the authority of the king of England: to reduce a king of France to the miserable condition of the British monarch was, in the bare conception, heinous and treasonable.'—*Considerations upon the French Revolution*, by Madame de Staël. The illustrious authoress is at once eloquent and successful in the vindication of her father, Necker, from the reproaches heaped upon him by the malevolent royalists.

object was a very natural one: it wished to get money at as little cost or sacrifice of power as possible. But all its expectations were at once frustrated, all its schemes overturned, if the three orders were merged in one assembly, and in that assembly a vast majority arrayed on the popular side. The danger, too, was becoming hourly more imminent. Yielding to the force of the impulse, the clergy had already voted the junction with the tiers-etat by a majority of 149 to 126. It was held essential, therefore, by an immediate blow, to bridle the impetuosity of the tiers-etat, and reduce it to pristine insignificance. The nobility and dignified clergy, headed by the Duke of Luxembourg and the Cardinal de Laroche-foucauld, had hastened to tender their submission to any measures the court might propose; and the parliament, through its organs, had offered to register as many edicts of taxation as it might please, if it would interpose to crush the tiers-etat. Vain attempt! Little did they know the sort of men they had to deal with, or little did they estimate the indomitable courage inspired by the conviction of a righteous cause. And the members of the tiers-etat had that conviction deeply seated in their minds, whilst the president they had chosen was a type of the legitimate moderation of their views. This was Bailly, whose name was the first that had issued from the urn in the ballot for representatives of the city of Paris, an academician, a man of letters, simple and artless in character, but fervent in the mission he deemed himself intrusted with. The ambition of these representatives was not at that time exorbitant: they contemplated merely a reform amounting to the establishment of a constitutional government upon an approved solid basis, but that this should be effected by the intervention of the nation itself. They regarded the king as a usurper of rights inherently belonging to the nation, to reconquer which was their bounden duty, their noble mission, from the pursuit of which they were to be neither intimidated nor cajoled. The advisers of the king, on the other hand, were wedded to a diametrically opposite theory—namely, that the nation had no rights save such as its sovereign might deign to confer, and were, moreover, inflated with notions which rendered their understandings impervious to the light of reason. They scorned the idea of a surrender, ridiculed the presumption of a few obscure citizens, and maintained that the clamour for reform proceeded only from a contemptible faction; so difficult is it to induce the possessors of power to forego a part to save the remainder. In the present instance they staked the whole upon the issue.

A proclamation appeared from the king suspending the sittings of the States-General until Monday the 22d June, when it was his intention to hold a royal sitting. This took place on the 20th. That same morning Bailly repaired, according to the adjournment of the preceding day, to the hall of the Assembly, where he found

the deputies crowded around the door, and denied admission by an officer in command of a body of Guards. The officer explained that he had positive orders to prevent any one from entering. Some of the younger representatives would have attempted to force their way, but Bailly quieted them. All were determined, nevertheless, to persist in holding the Assembly: some proposed to repair to Marly, and meet under the very windows of the king; others suggested the tennis-court. The latter was preferred; and thither the deputies proceeded, escorted by an immense multitude in high excitement. In this building, after a spirited harangue by Bailly, they took the oath, since so celebrated, not to separate until they had given a constitution to France. One deputy alone of the whole number refused to take it. The court was evidently confounded by this proceeding, for although the occasion demanded the utmost promptitude, the royal sitting was, by a fresh proclamation, postponed to the 23d. On the 22d the deputies again assembled; but finding the tennis-court closed against them, they perambulated the streets in quest of a place to meet in. Repulsed from the gate of the Franciscan convent, they found an asylum in the church of Saint Louis, which they entered, and ranged themselves in the central nave. Here they were joined by the majority of the clergy, amidst the liveliest transports of enthusiasm. Thus, by its delay, the design of the court to prevent the junction of the clergy was defeated.

The royal sitting took place on the following day. The same forms were observed as on opening the States-General, except that the military parade was much greater. Detachments of troops lined the streets and surrounded the building in which the assembly was held. The deputies of the tiers-etat were again made to wait, this time under a heavy fall of rain, until the superior orders of the clergy and nobility had entered and taken their seats on the right and left of the throne. The king was accompanied by the princes and a splendid retinue of courtiers. All the ministers were present, save one alone, and that was Necker, who marked his disapprobation by his absence. The speech of the king was that of an offended and absolute monarch. He upbraided the States-General with their disputes and delays; and in two declarations, read by one of the ministers, prescribed the form in which the deliberations of the States-General were henceforth to be conducted, and detailed the reforms he vouchsafed of his sovereign will to the people of France. These were no doubt, so far as they went, beneficial; but they fell far short of what was imperiously demanded. The States-General were to meet yearly, it is true, but simply to vote taxes; not as a legislature. The privileges, pecuniary and honorary, of the nobility and clergy were to be continued, except in so far as they freely consented to waive them; and all feudal and seignorial dues and services were expressly recognised

as invested with the inviolable character of property. The army was to remain constituted as it had ever been, and be at the unfettered disposal of the crown. The language of these declarations was most imperious. 'It is the pleasure of the king,' 'the king commands,' were the words used throughout. The conduct of the tiers-etat was severely censured, and all the resolutions it had passed cancelled and annulled. After these 'royal graces' had been read, the king, in a second speech, intimated that if his intentions were balked, if his wishes were not complied with, he would act alone, dispense with all States-General, and consider himself the sole representative of the people. He said not a word about granting a constitution, whereby even the measures of amelioration he propounded might be guaranteed; for the same authority that gave, might also take away. His declarations were received with gloomy silence.* A faint cry of *Vive le roi!* was raised by some of the nobility and clergy, but it died away in the mournful stillness. As the king rose, he ordered the deputies to retire, and assemble in their respective orders on the following day. Most of the nobility and clergy followed him out of the hall; the commons retained their seats. Mirabeau started to his feet. 'Gentlemen,' he cried, 'I confess that what you have just heard might be for the welfare of the country, if the gifts of despotism were not always dangerous. Why this dictatorial language, this display of arms, this violation of the national temple, to command you to be happy? Who gives you this command? Your vicegerent. Who makes imperious laws for you? Your vicegerent; he who should receive them from you. But the freedom of your debates is fettered; a military force encompasses the Assembly! Where are the enemies of the nation? Is Catiline at our gates? I call upon you to clothe yourselves with your dignity and legislative authority, and to remember the religious force of your oath; an oath that does not permit you to separate until you have established the constitution.'

The master of the ceremonies advanced and repeated the orders of the king to retire. 'Go tell your master,' Mirabeau exclaimed, 'that we are here by command of the people, and will not leave unless expelled at the point of the bayonet!' The Marquis de Brézé withdrew in confusion. The Assembly proceeded to affirm all its previous resolutions, and, at the instance of Mirabeau, it proclaimed the inviolability of its members. Thus it set at nought the authority of the king, who on his part took no steps to enforce it. He was struck with alarm indeed at the probable consequences

* The general feeling entertained respecting them may be gathered from a conversation related by Bailly. 'A few days after this,' he says, 'a minister asked me how it was we were not satisfied; for if the king had made such a declaration ten years ago, it would have been received with enthusiasm. "Yes, doubtless," I replied, "ten years ago." "What does the Assembly want then?" "It wants to do, and not that you should do for it."—*Mem.* vol. i. p. 221.

of his own act, and submitted to beseech Necker to remain in the ministry. The queen joined her solicitations to his, and Necker withdrew the resignation he had tendered. This served in some measure to calm the public irritation, which already, both in Versailles and Paris, was expressed in tumultuous gatherings of the people. So utter was the failure of this *coup d'état* (which the Count d'Artois—one of its prime instigators, who was gifted with as little discretion and foresight then as when known under the name of Charles X.—had fondly anticipated would restore all the omnipotence of the crown), that on the very next day the majority of the clergy appeared in the Assembly. On the 25th, forty-seven members of the nobility joined the general body, the most distinguished of whom were the Duke of Orleans, Lally-Tollendal, Clermont-Tonnerre, the two Lameths, Duport, and the Marquis de Lafayette, who were hailed with rapturous applause. Further resistance was deemed hopeless; the king himself exhorted the majority of the nobility and minority of the clergy to give up the contest, and terminate the schism. They obeyed, and on the 27th June entered the hall of the Assembly. For a time they affected to keep aloof, and not to mingle with the herd of the deputies; but soon all distinctions ceased, and the existence of separate orders was annihilated. The discomfiture of the court and the triumph of the tiers-etat was complete. In the clash of might, that of mere supremacy had quailed and succumbed. Bailly, the obscure citizen, continued to occupy the chair of the National Assembly, comprising as it now did the first magnates of the land, both lay and ecclesiastical.* The people were in an ecstacy of delight; Paris and Versailles were both illuminated, and bonfires lighted in the streets, around which dancing was kept up throughout the night by revellers of every grade and caste.

The chief object of the Assembly was the framing of a constitution, and to this task it applied itself. But its labours were soon interrupted by dread of the intentions of the court. A large body of troops was gradually assembled in the neighbourhood of

* An effort was, however, made to oust him on the very day of the complete junction. 'The Cardinal de Laroche-foucauld rose, and advanced close up to me. I heard a member of the clergy say to him, "Monseigneur, you ought to break up the sitting." "You are right," replied the cardinal, moving to return to his place with the view of announcing it. I stopped him. "Monseigneur," I said, "you cannot break up the sitting; you are not the president." "But it is late," he retorted; "nobody has dined." "Every one," I answered, "is free to leave individually; but as to the Assembly, it can be adjourned only by its own will, and it is for me, its only president, to consult it." He did not insist; but it was evident that a design had been formed to dispossess me, and procure the presidency for the dean of the clergy.'—*Bailly, Mem.* vol. i. p. 252. A more serious attempt was afterwards made at a meeting held at the house of the keeper of the seals, where Bailly was taken to task with some asperity for not resigning the chair to the president of the first order; but he was immovable in upholding the rights and dignity of the tiers-etat, which had first constituted itself into an organised assembly.—P. 257-260.

Versailles and Paris, and the Marshal de Broglie appointed to the command. Cannon was brought in great quantities from the frontier towns, and all the preparations seemed to indicate a design against the independence of the Assembly. The inhabitants of Paris first took the alarm. Ever since the opening of the States-General, that city had been in a state of constant agitation. The garden of the Palais-Royal was thronged night and day with eager crowds, who were addressed by a succession of orators on the rights of the nation, the sufferings of the people, and other inflammatory topics. Several encounters had taken place between the populace and the troops; but the latter, in many instances, refused to obey orders and fire. The regiment of French Guards especially manifested the most decided spirit of insubordination. Some of its soldiers had been confined in the Abbaye for mutinous conduct, and were liberated by a mob, who forcibly broke open the prison. The king was fain to wink at this outrage; and, upon the intercession of the Assembly, to pardon the soldiers, after an illusory expiation. This state of things might justify the concentration of additional troops, particularly of the German and Swiss regiments, in which greater confidence could be placed; but it was viewed with suspicious jealousy by the Parisians, who besieged the Assembly with addresses and deputations on the subject. Accordingly, Mirabeau moved, on the 9th July, the adoption of an address to the king, intreating him to order the withdrawal of the army to a greater distance. The reply of the king was evasive and ironical: he stated that the increase of troops was simply with the view of suppressing disturbances, and guarding the safety of the Assembly; but that if it entertained any fears, he would transfer its sittings to Noyon or Soissons at its option. At either of those places it would have been completely at the mercy of the court.

Whilst this feeling of apprehension was growing and becoming hourly more intense, a rumour of Necker's dismissal excited universal consternation. At first whispered doubtfully, it soon spread through Versailles and Paris, and was ascertained to be true. Without any previous warning, Necker had received an order from the king on the 11th July, as he sat at dinner with his family, immediately to leave the kingdom. Finishing his repast without betraying any emotion, he departed the same afternoon, under pretence of making an excursion to Saint-Ouen, and took the road to Brussels. Four of the other ministers were displaced at the same time, Necker being succeeded in the finance department by the intendant Foulon. This extraordinary measure provoked an immediate outbreak in Paris. The news did not reach the capital until the morning of the 12th, which happened to be a Sunday, and consequently a day of idleness. An immense assemblage blocked up every avenue of the Palais-Royal, and a young

man, Camille-Desmoulins, afterwards a prominent actor in the drama of the Revolution, sprang upon a table, and harangued the multitude in a passionate invective. 'The dismissal of Necker,' he exclaimed, 'is the knell of a St Bartholomew of patriots. This very night the Swiss and German battalions will move from the Champ de Mars to slaughter us! But one resource is left to us—to fly to arms!' Loud acclamations responded in approval. The orator then advised that a distinguishing symbol should be assumed whereby patriots might be known. A green cockade was voted. Plucking a leaf from a tree, and affixing it to his hat, Camille gave the signal, which was eagerly followed, and all the trees were stripped bare. Then, as if by some preconcerted movement, a rush was made to a sculptor's shop in the Palais-Royal, where the busts of Necker and the Duke of Orleans were seized, and borne through the streets in tumultuous procession. All were made to take off their hats as the busts passed, and thus the crowd proceeded in noise and disorder to the Place Louis XV., where it was charged by a detachment of dragoons under the Prince de Lambesc, who dispersed it, and cut down the bearer of one of the busts. The greater part of the multitude fled into the garden of the Tuileries, whither the Prince de Lambesc followed. Here a stand was made by the populace at the Turning Bridge, and more blood was spilt. The garden was at length cleared, and the prince returned with his troops to the Place Louis XV. The French Guards meanwhile, from fear of their disloyal tendencies, had been locked up in their barracks; they now broke loose, and drew up in order of battle against the German regiment of the Royal Allemand. The latter took to flight, after sustaining a loss of two men killed and three wounded. Orders were forthwith sent to all the troops encamped in the Champ de Mars to advance into the city. As they came up, they were confronted by the Guards in the Champs Elysées with levelled muskets; they halted, and refused to charge. A Swiss regiment was the first to give this example. The officers had no other alternative but to lead their soldiers back to the Champ de Mars.

Thus Paris was left almost wholly abandoned to an exasperated mob. As night approached, the gunsmiths' shops were forced and plundered, and all the barriers were destroyed. A horde of brigands traversed the streets, and spread terror and dismay in every quarter. Amid this horrible disorder the Assembly of Electors met at the Hotel de Ville, to take measures for the security of the city. This assembly had continued to sit ever since the election of members of the States-General, and it now took upon itself the functions of government. Paris was at this time divided into sixty districts, in which the electors were chosen to nominate deputies to the States-General. In each of these districts the tocsin was sounded, and every citizen summoned to attend, that

an organisation might be effected for the general protection, as well against the troops of the king as against the mob and the brigands. A correspondence was opened by the Assembly of Electors with the districts, and a scheme was speedily matured for the formation of a burgher guard, consisting of 48,000 men. Contingents were furnished by the several districts, and the whole placed under the command of general officers appointed by the central authority at the Hotel de Ville. Such was the origin of the National Guards. The green cockade of Camille-Desmoulins was superseded by the colours of the city of Paris—blue and red—which afterwards, in their turn, gave way to the famous tri-colour—blue, white, and red—which soon became the national emblem. But before this force could be enrolled, and brought into operation, numerous outrages were committed. The convent of Saint Lazarus was ransacked in quest of arms, and afterwards set on fire. The *Garde-Meuble*, a repository of ancient arms and armour, was broken into, and every available weapon carried off; but all the other costly objects within it were left untouched. The prison of La Force was stormed, and all the prisoners, who were principally debtors, set at liberty. The felons incarcerated in the Châtelet, hearing of this occurrence, expected also to be released; but growing impatient, they attempted to overpower their keepers and procure their own liberation. The governor of the jail had no better resource to quell this mutiny than to invoke the aid of the very mob which had levelled the gates of La Force. It entered upon his call, fired upon the prisoners, and reduced them to submission. Such are the strange inconsistencies of popular impulses!

The abrupt dismissal of the ministry, and the dangers of the capital, formed the themes of exciting debates in the National Assembly. A fresh address was voted to the king, soliciting him to remove the troops from Versailles and Paris, and to sanction the organisation of a burgher militia. This address was presented by a deputation, at the head of which was the Archbishop of Vienne, who had succeeded Bailly as president of the Assembly. The king replied, with great firmness, that he would do neither the one nor the other; that the measures he had taken for insuring tranquillity he saw no occasion to vary; and that the extent of Paris forbade the idea of intrusting it to a burgher guard. In the uncertainty and apprehension that prevailed touching the actual intentions of the court, this reply was regarded as indicating a settled resolution to employ force. What other object could be inferred from the change of ministers? The banishment of Necker pointed obviously to a reversal of his system, which was one of conciliation and concession. If it had any meaning at all, none other could be attached to it. The Baron de Breteuil, the head of the new ministry, was known to be a violent oppo-

ment of popular rights. Hence everything served to inspire the gloomiest doubts and suspicions. These were felt to be so natural and imperious, that not a voice was raised in exculpation of the court; and the Assembly forthwith passed resolutions, by a unanimous vote, declaring that Necker and the displaced ministers carried with them the esteem and regret of the nation; that the ministers and counsellors of the king, *of whatever rank and state*, were personally responsible for whatever calamities might occur, or infringements be made on the rights of the nation; that the public debt, having been placed under the safeguard of French integrity, could never be washed away by an infamous bankruptcy; that the removal of the army, and the establishment of burgher guards, were essential; and that all the previous resolutions of the 17th, 20th, and 23d of June were valid, and of full force and effect. A copy of these resolutions was ordered to be transmitted to the king, and they were likewise published and disseminated through the kingdom. Finally, fearing that the hall of the Assembly might be occupied by soldiers during the night, the sittings were declared permanent.

The night of the 13th-14th July was passed in anxiety and alarm. In the morning the most sinister rumours were circulated. The plans of the new ministry were stated to be definitively fixed. The king was to quit Versailles, and leave the Assembly to be dispersed at the point of the bayonet. The leading deputies were to be arrested, and Paris and Versailles occupied by an overwhelming military force. Additional credit was given to these rumours by an announcement that the queen, attended by the ladies of the court, had been seen going through the ranks of the soldiers, to encourage them, and ordering the distribution of refreshments among them. On the motion of Mirabeau, a fresh deputation was appointed to wait upon the king to ascertain his intentions, and to renew the complaints against the disposition of the army. Before it returned with an answer, two electors rushed breathlessly into the hall to proclaim that Paris was in a complete state of insurrection, that the Bastille had been attacked, and that the streets were running with blood. A second deputation was nominated to represent the increasing dangers of the capital to the king, and to insist yet more strenuously on the removal of the troops. The unfortunate Louis XVI. had been in consultation the whole day with his ministers as to the course it behoved him to take. It is impossible to say what secret hopes might have been indulged, what schemes formed, consequent upon the dismissal of the Necker ministry, and which led to it; but whatever they were, they had been unequivocally frustrated by the refusal of the troops to act on the 12th. The king was reduced to the most pitiable state; his ministers could suggest no mode of obviating the difficulties of his position. To withdraw

the troops from the capital when, and because it was, in open rebellion, seemed a strange request ; yet he was assured by the deputations that no other means existed of restoring tranquillity. With a bitter pang he yielded to their representations, and promised that the troops encamped on the Champ de Mars should be removed, which was really tantamount to an abandonment of the reins of power ; for what is an absolute monarch without his cohorts at the seat of government ? Nevertheless, this reply was deemed unsatisfactory by the Assembly, which resolved to continue its instances with the king until not only the troops in the Champ de Mars, but all those stationed around Paris and Versailles, should be removed to a distance. This earnestness to get rid of any military force near the capital was natural in the Assembly. Distrustful of the court, conscious that an opportunity only was awaited to crush it, the masses were the sole means of its support, and in their triumph over authority it saw its own. If the sincerity of the court could have been depended upon—which was impossible, after the manifestation of the 23d June, and the dismissal of Necker—it would have been interested in the preservation of order and authority, instead of being impelled to vindicate, and even encourage, popular excesses. The danger of inuring the populace to insurrection and bloodshed was overlooked in the more pressing emergency of its position ; and thus it helped to raise a power which soon towered above all control.

A decisive event meanwhile had taken place in Paris. During the day of the 13th, the Hotel de Ville had been besieged by applicants for arms. The supply at the disposal of the Committee of Electors was insignificant in reference to the quantity required. But the provost of the trades, De Flesselles, who was chairman of the committee, announced the approach of twelve thousand muskets from Charleville. These were impatiently awaited ; but being not forthcoming even on the following morning, a cry of treachery was raised among the multitude. Amidst the tumult, in which the life of De Flesselles was threatened, the rioters were led by one De Corny, late solicitor to the municipality of Paris, to the Hotel des Invalides, in search of arms. The governor, De Sombreuil, at first refused to open the gates, but seeing that the people were determined to force an entrance, he voluntarily admitted them, whereupon every weapon in the arsenal was seized, together with several pieces of artillery. The night had been passed in continued uproar and agitation. The Place de Grève, in front of the Hotel de Ville, was crowded with intercepted vehicles, and a belligerent mob uttering alternate cries of ‘The nation for ever!’ and ‘Death to traitors!’ whilst at the Palais-Royal the patriots had formed themselves into a permanent assembly. Patrols were placed at all the gates of the city, and no one was allowed to leave it. On the side of the Champ de Mars, where the

troops were posted, artillery was planted, and a large body of the burgher guards drawn up, fully equipped and armed. In the morning the streets were thronged with angry hordes carrying pikes, muskets, and swords, shouting in deafening accents, 'To the Bastille! to the Bastille!' This was the well-known State prison, of which so many gloomy tales were current. It had long been an object of almost superstitious terror to the inhabitants of Paris, who, as they passed its grim and lofty walls, regarded them with an involuntary shudder. Many were the victims who had been here abandoned to ruthless tyranny, immured in cells, and cut off from all communication with the living world. Its demolition was eagerly demanded by the triumphant insurgents, the more vehemently because it was reported that the cannons on the turrets were pointed, and about to be fired on the city. From every quarter the people poured to this central point. The drawbridge of the fortress was drawn up, and preparations made to resist a siege. A deputy of the districts, Thuriot, sought a conference with the governor, Delaunay, and was admitted within the walls. He received an assurance that the guns were withdrawn from their embrasures, and that the garrison, consisting of Swiss and invalid soldiers, would not fire unless attacked. Satisfied, he returned to the crowd outside, and endeavoured to calm the excitement, but his voice was drowned amidst shouts of 'Down with the Bastille! Let us storm the Bastille!' Forthwith two men sprang to the roof of the guardhouse, and with axes broke the chains of the outer drawbridge, which fell, and the assailants rushed over it to the second bridge. Here they maintained an exchange of musketry with the garrison for a time, but at length retired out of range of shot. Detachments hastened to the Hotel de Ville to obtain fresh supplies of ammunition. These the committee was unable to give, and the exasperated mob reproached it with treachery, and menaced it with revenge. In the interim a fresh attack was made on the second bridge of the Bastille, headed by two soldiers, Hulin and Elie. The renewed firing alarmed the committee, which sent a deputation to the governor, to urge upon him the expediency of admitting a burgher guard into the fortress. The members of this deputation were unable to obtain a hearing. The same fate attended a second deputation, sent on a like errand. The conflict had now raged for some hours, when about two in the afternoon the French Guards appeared with artillery, and commenced a cannonade against the gate. It was answered by a discharge of grape, which did great execution among the besiegers. But the governor conceived it impossible to hold out, and hoisted a flag of truce. A parley was opened, but amidst the noise and confusion nothing could be determined. The governor, in despair, seized a lighted match, to fire the powder magazine and blow up the building, but was prevented by

the garrison. An officer thrust a paper through the wicket, containing an offer to surrender, if a promise were given that the lives of the garrison should be spared. The French Guards immediately gave the required pledge, and the drawbridge was lowered. In poured the crowd with exulting yells, and despite all the efforts of the Guards to protect the prisoners, many were slain, and among the number Delaunay the governor. Search was made through all the dungeons for the numerous captives expected to be found within them, but only seven were discovered, of whom two had been rendered insane by the horrors of confinement.

The Hotel de Ville was still the scene of a terrible commotion. It was filled and surrounded by a furious mob of men and women, clamouring for arms and ammunition. Loud execrations were heaped on the Committee of Electors, and particularly on Flesselles the provost. Whilst in this state of alarm, the committee was relieved by the approach of the conquerors of the Bastille, who came in all the frenzy of successful combat, bearing in triumph a grenadier of the Guards, and rending the air with cries of 'Victory! Liberty! The nation for ever!' One carried the keys of the fortress, another the records, a third part of the governor's peruke. The prisoners who had been saved were escorted by the French Guards; they were assailed with demoniac shouts of 'No quarter! Death to those who have fired on their fellow-citizens!' but the electors interceded for them, the Guards vowed to defend them with their lives, and eventually a vote of amnesty was carried by acclamation. The vengeance of the mob, however, must be satiated by some victim. The unfortunate De Flesselles seemed a fit sacrifice; he was charged with having written to Delaunay, exhorting him to resistance, and stating that he would amuse the Parisians with cockades and promises until succours arrived. In vain he attempted to defend himself; he was interrupted by cries of 'Come to the Palais-Royal to be tried!' He descended from the bench on which he sat, saying, 'Well, gentlemen, let us go to the Palais-Royal;' and advanced into the midst of the crowd, which closed around him and hurried him down the stairs of the hotel. Shortly after crossing the Place de Grève, he was shot dead by some unknown ruffian. His head was hoisted on the end of a pike, and paraded through the streets side by side with that of the murdered governor of the Bastille.

After the first intoxication of victory, dread of the consequences arose. Marshal de Broglie was rumoured to be in full march on Paris with thirty thousand men and a numerous artillery. The tocsin of alarm was sounded in every district, the citizens assembled in affright, and preparations were hastily made to withstand a siege. Barricades were erected, the pavement of the streets was pulled up, piles of stones were collected on the house-tops to hurl upon the soldiers, deep trenches were dug, and

thousands of pikes manufactured. But these precautions were superfluous. It is asserted by all the writers hostile to the court, that the night of the 14th July was certainly fixed for the dispersion of the Assembly and the storming of Paris, and they quote in corroboration an intercepted despatch from De Breteuil to De launay, pressing him to hold out if attacked, as he would be speedily relieved. They assert, moreover, that many thousand copies of the declaration of the 23d June were ready for distribution, and that a hundred millions of bank-notes had been engraved, to be put in circulation. These statements are controverted by the royalist writers, and on which side the truth lies, is of little consequence. It is obvious that the advisers of the king *must* have had some project in view, but they either faltered when the moment of execution came, or circumstances rendered it impracticable.* Be this as it may, however, the first great phase of the Revolution was accomplished, and its onward march secured. The capture of the Bastille was fatal to the royal authority, not only as a successful act of aggression, but in the prestige arising from the reduction of a fortress whose very name was sufficient to evoke terror, and which the great Condé had besieged in vain for twenty-three days.



CHAPTER II.

VISIT OF LOUIS XVI. TO PARIS—LABOURS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
ON THE CONSTITUTION—STORMING OF THE PALACE OF VERSAILLES—
14TH JULY TO 5TH OCTOBER 1789.

Intelligence of the capture of the Bastille reached Versailles late in the evening of the 14th July. The National Assembly was sitting perplexed with alternate hopes and fears. The members were in continual movement, seeking to gather tidings both of events in Paris and of the designs of the court. Of the former, accounts were so far cheering, that it was known the French Guards had joined the people; but the strength of the place seemed to defy the possibility of its reduction by an undisciplined populace: of the latter, little was gathered, except that the troops had been visited in their quarters by the princes and courtiers of both sexes, and money and wine freely distributed among them.

* Necker thus darkly alludes to the subject in the following passage of his memoirs:—‘I could never ascertain certainly what design was contemplated. There were secrets and after-secrets, and *I am convinced the king himself was not in all of them.* It was intended, perhaps, according to circumstances, to draw the monarch into measures which they did not dare to mention to him beforehand.’—Vol. ii. p. 85.

At midnight two deputies entered the hall, and announced, amid an anxious silence, the possession of the Bastille by the victorious citizens of Paris. A deep emotion thrilled through the Assembly, for all the importance of the blow was felt. A member rose to move that a deputation be immediately sent to the king, again insisting upon the removal of the troops. 'No!' Clermont-Tonnerre exclaimed; 'let us leave them the night to take counsel; kings, like other men, must buy experience.' It was resolved that the deputation should be postponed till the following day.

At the palace all was in consternation. The king had retired to rest, as was his custom, at eleven o'clock. The Duke de Liancourt forced his way to the royal chamber and awoke him. He briefly related the startling news. 'How; it is a rebellion then!' exclaimed the astonished monarch. 'Say rather a revolution, sire,' replied the duke. A long and anxious conference ensued between the king and this enlightened servant, in which the latter explained to him the true state of affairs, and besought him to yield to a pressure which it was now hopeless to resist. Louis acceded, for the advice coincided with his own impressions. Accordingly, when the Assembly met on the following morning, and the deputation it had nominated was about to set out for the palace, a sudden report came that the king himself was on his way, unattended by guards. Acclamations of joy immediately resounded through the hall, which were checked by Mirabeau. 'Let us wait,' he said, 'until his majesty makes manifest to us the good dispositions we are told he possesses. The blood of our brethren flows in the streets of Paris. Let a sullen respect be the first welcome to the monarch by the representatives of an unfortunate people. The silence of nations is the monitor of kings.' The king entered the hall accompanied only by his two brothers. At his appearance, at sight of his grieved countenance, the injunctions of Mirabeau were forgotten, and he was greeted with bursts of applause. He delivered a short oration, interrupted at every sentence by grateful exclamations. He threw himself wholly upon the Assembly, saying, 'I, who am but one with the nation, trust altogether in you. I ask your assistance at this juncture to secure the safety of the State. Depending upon the love and allegiance of my subjects, I have given orders for the removal of the troops from Paris and Versailles.' The Archbishop of Vienne, president of the Assembly, having replied to this speech, all the members arose in a transport of enthusiasm, crowded around the monarch, and escorted him to the door of the hall. Affected even to tears by these marks of affection, the king resolved to proceed on foot to the palace. The whole Assembly—clergy, nobility, and commons, mingled in a promiscuous crowd—followed him. The people pressed around and before him; his path was blocked, and he could with difficulty penetrate to the

gates of the palace. The shouts of the multitude had been heard within its recesses; the queen, in alarm, flew to the balcony. Thence, with the dauphin in her arms, she beheld her husband struggling in the midst of the excited and enraptured mass. Her first fears were dispelled, and gave way to a thrill of tenderness and emotion: she descended to meet the king, and embraced him at the threshold. For a moment all was happiness and confidence; but the reconciliation could scarcely be other than transitory and hollow.

The king's eyes might be opened, but the court was still far from being disabused of its illusions, and the Assembly speedily relapsed into its former suspicions. On the sitting being resumed, a motion was made for an address to the king, praying him forthwith to dismiss his present ministers. This was withdrawn on the remark of Clermont-Tonnerre, that 'his majesty ought to be suffered to relish at least for four-and-twenty hours the joy and happiness of being king of so loyal a nation; and that on so glorious a day it was beneath the dignity of the Assembly to attend to so contemptible a ministry.' A deputation was, however, named to proceed to Paris, for the purpose of conveying the gratifying intelligence of the king's declaration, and assisting in the restoration of tranquillity. Bailly, Sieyes, and Lafayette were among its members. The happy tidings preceded them. The exultation of the Parisians was unbounded; a prodigious concourse of people thronged all the avenues, and covered the square of the Place de Grève. The deputies were ushered into the hall of the Hotel de Ville, where Lafayette read aloud the speech of the king. Lally-Tollendal afterwards addressed the assembled citizens, and was crowned with a wreath of laurel. The city being, by the death of Flesselles, without a chief magistrate, Bailly was proposed to fill the place, and with unanimous acclamations installed as mayor of Paris. The command of the burgher guard was bestowed on Lafayette. At the instance of the Archbishop of Paris, this auspicious day was closed by the celebration of a *Te Deum* in the cathedral of Notre Dame.

Upon the return of the deputation to the Assembly, Lally-Tollendal, in its name, reported that the universal cry of the Parisians was for the recall of Necker. With that minister the cause of the people was held to be identified. A motion was immediately submitted for an address soliciting his recall, which was rendered unnecessary by a message from the king, announcing the dissolution of the Breteuil ministry, and his intention to reinstate Necker. An address of thanks was accordingly substituted, and a deputation appointed to present it to the king. To this deputation the king intimated that, in compliance with the declared wishes of the citizens of Paris, he purposed paying a visit to the capital, and begged that the Assembly might communicate

his design to the authorities. One hundred members were named to accompany the king on this occasion ; but such was the general eagerness, that a much greater number swelled his retinue. It was on the morning of the 17th July that the king left the palace of Versailles to intrust himself amid the insurrectionary population of Paris. The queen and the court viewed his departure with the deepest alarm, scarcely hoping he would be permitted to return alive. Those who had been mainly instrumental in producing the painful exigency, shrank in dismay from the perspective danger, and, obeying the instinct of cowardice, or smitten with the consciousness of the evil-doings they had meditated, fled the kingdom. The Count d'Artois,* the Princes of Condé and Conti, the Polignacs,† and others, were the first who set the example of emigration, and who sought personal safety in an ignominious flight. The king was met at the gates of Paris by Bailly and the municipal body. The mayor presented to him the keys of the city, saying, 'Sire, I bring your majesty the keys of your good city of Paris ; they are the same that were presented to Henry IV. He had conquered his people ; now it is the people who have reconquered their king.'‡ He passed through the streets, which were lined by a double row of the burgher militia, armed with pikes, swords, and muskets. His reception was unfavourable ; cries of *Vive la Nation!* alone were heard. On arriving at the Place de Grève, he alighted and entered the Hotel

* Scarcely two months previously, the Count d'Artois, having occasion to write a letter to the president of the order of nobility, had seized the opportunity to make the following absurd boast :—' I pray you, sir, to speak to the Chamber in my name, and give it the formal and certain assurance that the blood of my ancestors has been transmitted to me in all its purity, and that so long as one drop of it remains in my veins, I will not fail to show the world I am worthy of being born a French nobleman.'—*Mirabeau's Journal—fifth letter to his constituents.*

† The Duke and Duchess de Polignac were especial favourites at court, and an account of the income they enjoyed from the public purse is curious, as showing both how natural was their warm attachment to the cause of royalty, and what high prizes were offered to the cupidity of courtiers. The various items of this income were as follow :—

	Francs.
The place of first equerry to the queen, with appointments, - - -	80,000
The domain of Fenestranes, - - -	70,000
The place of gouvernante to the children of France (the Duchess), - - -	50,000
Pension on the royal treasury, - - -	80,000
General direction of the stud, - - -	12,000

292,000 francs (£11,700 sterling).

When the Red Book, the register of secret disbursements, was published, it appeared that the domain of Fenestranes had been purchased for M. de Polignac at an expense of 1,200,000 francs. The above figures are taken from a letter written by the duke himself in reply to attacks upon him in the National Assembly.—*Weber*, vol. ii. p. 23, and *Ap. Letter B.*

‡ The queen was extremely indignant at this expression. Bailly defends it by alleging the clear meaning to be *recovered*, and that he used the word *reconquered* as more expressive. In truth, he perpetrated a very silly figure of rhetoric.

de Ville, under an arch of pikes and naked swords. He was conducted to a throne in the great hall, and addressed in a congratulatory speech by the president of the Committee of Electors. Bailly handed him a national cockade, which he stuck in his hat; and De Corny, city solicitor, proposed that a monument should be erected to Louis XVI., *the restorer of liberty*. Then the feelings of the multitude, hitherto repressed, broke out in enthusiastic acclamations, which so affected the amiable monarch, that he was unable to deliver the speech he had prepared. He called to him Bailly, who spoke in his name, and said that the king was come to calm any uneasiness that might remain as to his intentions, and to enjoy the sight and love of his people. Lally-Tollendal then arose and spoke in a strain of impassioned eloquence.

‘Behold the king,’ he said, ‘for whom you loudly called, and whose name alone excited your raptures when, two days ago, we mentioned it in the midst of you!’ Turning to the king, he said, ‘There is not a man here who is not ready to shed the last drop of his blood for you, and for your lawful authority. The present generation of Frenchmen is not so unfortunate, sire, as to have it in reserve to belie fourteen centuries of loyalty. We would all perish, if it were necessary, in defending a throne which is as sacred to us as to yourself, and the august family whom we placed upon it eight centuries ago.’

Such the language held in the late arena of revolt, and applauded to the echo! The king was overcome by his emotions; he could only articulate, ‘My people may always depend upon my love.’ He ratified by an express act the appointment of Bailly to the mayoralty, and of Lafayette to the command of the militia; and after showing himself to the populace, who loudly clamoured to behold him, re-entered his carriage. He was escorted on his return to Versailles by the burgher guard and a great part of the population of Paris. The joy of the multitude partook of intoxication; the carriage of the king was surrounded, and all sought to grasp his hand, to cheer him with assurances of devotion. Thus he entered in tumultuous triumph the city of Versailles, and at length reached the palace, where the anxious queen stood to receive him with extended arms.

This journey of Louis XVI. to Paris may be viewed as a direct homage to the popular will, a formal sanction of the principle of insurrection, and was so regarded by the municipality of Paris, which henceforth assumed almost an equality with the National Assembly. He undertook it, doubtless, with the best intentions, in the hope of appeasing and conciliating a population inflamed with the sudden acquisition and consciousness of power. But it had only the effect of bringing the royal authority into more complete contempt. The misfortune of Louis XVI. was to be placed between two extremes; he must either draw the sword, or follow

the movement, with the forlorn idea of directing it. Each course was equally perilous, and perhaps the latter, at this juncture, alone practicable. The National Assembly itself was almost in the like predicament. It must either side with the executive power, and give it strength, or encourage a spirit which was essentially anarchical. Distrust of the court forbade the first, and necessitated the last alternative, all the fatal consequences of which could not then be foreseen. Besides, it possessed the national confidence, and might be justified in supposing it could always allay the storm when needful, whenever it had reached a height necessary for a time to insure the triumph of liberty, but menacing, if unchecked, to the consolidation of order. Furthermore, in the prostration of the royal authority, it had become the paramount power of the State, and begun to enjoy all the sweets of sovereignty. Representations and appeals were no longer made to the crown, but to the National Assembly. The mayor of Poissy appeared at its bar, to crave its interposition to suppress disturbances in that town and in St Germain. It deputed some of its members for the purpose, who succeeded in rescuing the victims of popular fury only at the risk of their lives. Other accounts came to it from different parts of the kingdom, giving intelligence of commotions in almost every town and district. It arrogated the prerogative of issuing a proclamation authorising the formation of burgher guards throughout the country, and exhorting all Frenchmen to respect the principles of peace and order. It was manifest that the only persuasives to this respect consisted in their own good sense and forbearance.

The inhabitants of Paris, who served as an example to the rest of the nation, were very far from evincing these qualities. The Committee of Electors had been displaced, and succeeded by a body composed of two, and subsequently of five, delegates from each of the sixty-one districts, who took the title of Representatives of the *Commune*. The organisation of this body was regulated entirely by itself; it usurped every administrative function of its own authority, without license from either the king or the Assembly. It was divided, like the latter, into committees, the most important of which at the moment was that charged with the provisioning of the city, and presided over by Bailly. From the scarcity of the last harvest, all the evils of a dearth were beginning to be severely felt, and it required extraordinary exertions, particularly in the unsettled state of the country, to procure sufficient supplies of food for an immense metropolis like Paris.* The scar-

* It is not possible to exaggerate the extreme difficulty of accomplishing this task, or indeed to conceive it, except by a perusal of 'Bailly's Memoirs,' or the Records of the Commune, which are filled with the most curious particulars. The usual commerce in grain was almost wholly suspended, and agents had to be sent in all directions to buy it, and forward it to Paris. Great quantities were procured from abroad, but the supply was always barely equal to the demand. The daily consumption was seldom provided twenty-four hours in

city, doubtless, added materially to the spirit of disorder among the people, who were thus more easily instigated to excesses by designing leaders. The streets were continually traversed by crowds, chiefly composed of women, clamouring for bread. It was difficult to rule over such a population, infuriated at once by the mania of revolt and by the cravings of hunger; and Bailly, with all his determination and zeal, was unequal to the task. In fact, all ideas of government were set at nought. Each district claimed to legislate and administer for itself; nay, the members of individual trades and professions advanced the like pretensions. It was the very confusion of chaos. All prior authority being subverted, there was a general scramble to seize it while yet in abeyance. The preservation of anything like order under such circumstances depended entirely upon Lafayette and the burgher guards. But against the ebullitions of popular excitement and wrath, they, too, were impotent. A frightful occurrence speedily demonstrated the fact. Foulon, who had succeeded Necker in the finance department, being discovered lurking in the vicinity of Paris, was seized by a body of men, and conveyed to the Hotel de Ville. He was accused of having said that the people ought to be made to eat hay;* and the news of his arrest immediately brought an immense mob to the Place de Grève, who soon forced ingress into the hotel, and with furious shouts demanded the death of the culprit. Bailly and Lafayette used all their influence to save him, or to procure a respite, that he might be tried. In this they had succeeded, when Foulon, overjoyed at his escape, clapped his hands in exultation. 'It is a plot,' shouted one of the mob; 'they are conniving!' No further efforts were then of any avail. The old man was torn from the side of Lafayette, hurried into the street, and hanged to the first lamp-post. His head was cut off and affixed to a pike, and his mutilated body dragged through the streets. At this moment a chaise was seen approaching the hotel, containing two inmates. One of them was recognised as Berthier, the son-in-law of Foulon, late intendant for the district of Paris under Marshal Broglie, who had been arrested under a forged order of the Commune at Compiègne. With a howl of savage delight, the murderers rushed towards this fresh victim, and thrust before his face the bleeding head of his father-in-law. Being conducted to the Hotel de Ville, he was ordered to be carried

advance; hence the anxiety was incessant, for an immediate insurrection would have followed an absolute want of bread. An accidental stoppage of some wagons did actually one day bring Paris within an hour of starvation. The populace was in continual agitation, and the authorities never free from apprehension. Bailly says pathetically that he was always glad when he saw a rainy day, for in bad weather the people kept within their houses.—*Memoirs*, tome ii. p. 233.

* Incredible as it may appear, Bertrand de Molleville acknowledges this to have been a habitual expression in the mouth of Foulon, whom he likewise describes as a person of the poorest capacity he ever knew.—*Annals*, vol. i. p. 347.

to the prison of the Abbaye; but when on the steps of the hotel, he was seized by the mob, and, despite the most strenuous exertions on the part of Lafayette, likewise cruelly butchered. He avoided the ignominy of being hanged: having snatched a weapon from one of the populace, he attempted to defend himself, and thus provoked them to cut him to pieces. Whilst yet alive, his heart was torn out by some wretch more ferocious than the rest, taken into the hotel, and laid on the table before the assembled citizens. They, appalled at the sight, sat in silent horror, and permitted the ruffian to elevate the heart on the point of his sword, and bear it off to figure in the procession behind the heads of the two murdered men.

This horrible outrage occurred on the 22d July, five days only after the visit of the king to Paris. It would appear to have been premeditated, and brought about by some occult influence, but of what precise nature yet remains a mystery. All parties have been accused of fomenting the crime, even the court itself.* Amidst the disorders of the time, scarcely an attempt was made to elicit the truth or to trace the offenders. The seizure of Foulon was perhaps in some degree accidental, but that of Berthier clearly planned, since it took place under a pretended order of the Commune of Paris. Upon hearing of his arrest, the Commune even sent a genuine order for his release, which was disregarded. So that, in his case, there can be no doubt of a secret machination, which must be charged to the account of those who could alone profit by keeping the populace in continual agitation—namely, those who already aimed at a social convulsion. These assuredly did not include the National Assembly, or the present ostensible leaders of the Revolution, whose views were directed solely to the establishment of a rational liberty. Bailly and Lafayette were both grieved and indignant. The latter refused any longer to hold the command of the militia, which had now assumed the appellation of the National Guard. It was only upon the urgent solicitation of the people themselves that he consented to retain it, and upon their promise to obey his voice in future. Their repentance was probably heartfelt, and for a time they observed comparative tranquillity; but their example had been unfortunately contagious throughout the provinces, not only amongst the inhabitants of towns, but also amongst the peasantry and farmers. These latter were animated with intense hatred against their old oppressors of the nobility, and they assembled in bands to burn their mansions, ravage their property, and destroy their title-deeds, the charters of their hateful privileges.

* It was on this occasion that the British government was first systematically assailed for exciting disturbances in France; an imputation renewed at every epoch of the Revolution. The Duke of Dorset, British ambassador at the time, deemed it his duty to contradict the calumny in a formal communication to the French government.

On the 28th July, Necker returned to Versailles. He had received the king's letter of recall at Basle, where he also encountered his old antagonists the Polignacs in their flight. His progress through France was a triumphal march; he was everywhere received with acclamations, and hailed as the saviour of the country. On the day following his arrival he appeared before the Assembly, and addressed it in a laconic speech, which was heard with enthusiasm. The ensuing day he repaired to Paris, to enjoy the intoxicating fumes of popular incense. As was befitting in his situation, he preached words of peace and oblivion of injuries. He sought and procured from the Commune a vote of amnesty, and a resolution to set at liberty the prisoners detained for taking part against the people on the 14th July, amongst whom the most distinguished was the Baron de Besenval, second in command of the army under Marshal Broglie. His conduct in this instance has been censured as presumptuous and inappropriate, although evidently dictated by mere generosity of feeling, natural to him under the circumstances of his own position. But his enemies eagerly seized upon it to damage a popularity which was offensive in their eyes. Of these he had none more bitter than Mirabeau, who instigated both the National Assembly and the districts of Paris to annul the resolution of the Commune, as incompetent to a body simply administrative. The blow proved disastrous to Necker, who henceforth began to be regarded with suspicion as an enemy of the people; so precarious is the breath of popular favour, and so early was it a crime in the French Revolution to mediate in the cause of clemency!

The attention of the National Assembly had been distracted by this series of events from the great labour of preparing the new constitution for France. It was expected with great impatience by the whole nation, since it was universally contemplated as the sure panacea for all evils. The task of its elaboration had been intrusted to a committee, which was almost wholly under the influence of the Abbé Sieyès. This was an extraordinary man: comprehensive in mind, keen and subtle in argument, he was nevertheless a pure rationalist, who would frame a constitution like a problem in mathematics. His maxims were just and accurate, his science profound, but his knowledge of human nature very imperfect. His ideas were drawn from books and abstract meditation, rather than from a practical acquaintance with men and societies. Yet he alone had deeply pondered the subject of a constitution, and necessarily exercised the authority of a man who, by his labours, had mastered its obvious difficulties. Thus he may be considered the author of the scheme propounded by the constitution committee, and submitted to the Assembly, which afterwards underwent sundry modifications, but was in its main features ultimately adopted. The first point discussed was the ex-

pediency of prefixing a declaration of rights as the basis on which the constitution should repose. This was still under deliberation, when, on the 4th August, a committee that had been appointed to investigate the causes of the disorders prevailing in the country, and to devise the means of suppressing them, presented its report. One of the most memorable scenes recorded in history followed the presentation of this report. It recommended the issuing of a proclamation menacing the disturbers of the public peace with condign punishment, and branding them as brigands and enemies of the nation. The Viscount de Noailles, a noble, appeared in the tribune. He spoke with deep emotion. 'Not by measures of severity,' he cried, 'are the good people of France to be tranquillised, but rather by the removal of their grievances and just causes of complaint. These spring from the feudal system, all the oppressive dues and services of which ought to be abolished or made redeemable.' He moved that a decree be passed accordingly. The motion was seconded by another noble, the Duke d'Aiguillon, in a pathetic oration, and adopted by acclamation. An impulse was imparted which produced a species of delirium. Some members from their seats, others from the tribune, others at the table of the secretaries, proposed the sacrifice of their exclusive privileges. The clergy abandoned their tithes, pluralities, and fees. The nobles gave up their seignorial rights, rights of game, dove-cots, and warrens. The commons, having no personal abrogations to make, surrendered the privileges of the towns and provinces. Equality of taxation was established. All citizens were declared equally eligible to civil, ecclesiastical, and military offices. In a word, on one night, under the influence of a sudden enthusiasm, easily kindled among men of excitable temperaments like the French, the whole system of privileges was annihilated, and all the burdens that had weighed on industry suppressed. The Archbishop of Paris, he who had so strenuously opposed the junction of the orders, was the first to move that the great event should be celebrated by a *Te Deum*, performed in the presence of the king and the members of the National Assembly. Lally-Tollendal proposed that Louis XVI. should be proclaimed restorer of French liberty. Both motions were instantly adopted, and with one voice the whole assembly, joined by the spectators in the galleries, amid a tumultuous rapture, which continued for full fifteen minutes, hailed Louis XVI. as *the restorer of French liberty*.

Such was the famous night of the 4th of August. On the following day, when the intoxication of the scene had passed away, regret was felt at the extent of the sacrifices that had been made. It was even denied that many of the resolutions of abolition had been actually passed amidst the confusion which prevailed; that, especially, relative to tithes. On this subject the Abbé Sieyès sided with his order, and contended for the maintenance of tithes,

or at least for their redemption on equitable terms. In the heat of his argument, he apostrophised the Assembly with the strong expression—‘ You wish to be free, and know not how to be just.’ The position he upheld was sound, but unavailing. He maintained that tithes were instituted for the support of religion, and that their abolition, without adequate consideration, would be simply a boon to the landed proprietors at the expense of the nation. He was answered, that religion being the concern of all, ought to be supported by all, and that consequently its ministers must derive their incomes solely from the State. The question was one that possessed, in reality, little practical importance, as tithes had been already universally repudiated, and their payment could not have been enforced. So the clergy, in point of fact, only made a virtue of necessity, and showed discretion in substituting the State for their future paymaster. No idea yet prevailed of dis severing the Church from the State, nor was the principle even enunciated which subsequently became predominant, that the State ought to have no connection with a church, and that those who sought the consolations of religion should themselves pay for them. It was accordingly finally decreed that tithes and all ecclesiastical dues should be abolished, but provision in lieu thereof be made for the celebration of religion, the support of its ministers, the relief of the poor, and the repair of churches. All the decrees emanating from the resolutions of the 4th August were eventually presented to the king, who, after some demur, promulgated them as laws, accepted the title of the restorer of French liberty, and joined the National Assembly in rendering a solemn thanksgiving to the Almighty.

These measures of the National Assembly have been decried as constituting a direct attack upon the rights of property; but it is manifest that if the anomalous privileges they abrogated had not been relinquished by the holders themselves, they must have been swept away by the mere force of circumstances. Besides, such of them as were capable of being made the subject of valuation, were not immediately annulled, but simply rendered redeemable—a distinction which, it is true, in the rapid course of the Revolution, proved little more than nominal. But at the moment, the intention was to act fairly between the occupiers of land and their feudal superiors, so far as was possible in the fermentation of the time; and if order had been restored, as was then fondly hoped, it would have been realised. The spirit of anarchy, however, had been too fatally evoked. On the 7th August, the ministers of the king appeared, by his command, before the Assembly, and drew a frightful picture of the state of the country. The Archbishop of Bordeaux, keeper of the seals, a friend of Necker, spoke in their name, and described every part of France as a prey to disorder: the courts of justice were powerless—the operations of trade suspended—incendiarism, murder, and pillage predominated through-

out France. He besought the Assembly to terminate this disastrous state of things, by finishing its labours on the constitution, to which the king looked forward with confidence, as calculated to revive peace and tranquillity. In this expectation Louis was doubtless sincere; for he might surely augur, that until the government was definitively settled, the population would continue agitated, and the executive power be kept without the means, through mere jealousy, of enforcing order. The Assembly contented itself with issuing a proclamation, in which it took care to throw the whole odium of the disturbances upon insidious reports spread by enemies of the nation, who, it alleged, since they could no longer arrest, were intent to discredit the Revolution, by exciting undue alarms, and provoking excesses. It, however, authorised and exhorted the various municipal authorities to employ the National Guards, and even the regular army when needful, in the suppression of outrages and the punishment of offenders. From the tenor of this document, it was obvious the Assembly still clung to the terror of a popular insurrection as an engine to consolidate liberty, and that it refused to invest the crown with license or power to interfere efficaciously, still fearing the secret designs of the court more than the open insurgency of the people. The latter, indeed, it viewed at most as a temporary effervescence, easily to be calmed. It even withheld from Necker the means of replenishing the exhausted exchequer. That minister presented before it a statement of the finances sufficiently appalling. From the extraordinary drain caused by the purchase of corn resold at a loss, and, above all, from the difficult and precarious collection of the taxes, it was scarcely possible to meet the current expenses of the State. Necker consequently proposed to raise a fresh loan of thirty millions (£1,250,000 sterling), at five per cent., to be repaid out of the first operations of the projected sinking fund. The Assembly reluctantly acknowledged the necessity of contracting this loan, but reduced the interest on it to four and a-half per cent., without any stipulation as to repayment. It relied too lightly upon patriotism supplying the want of confidence with capitalists. The national credit was at the lowest ebb, and the loan proved an utter failure. Not more than two millions and a-half out of thirty were subscribed.

Amidst such embarrassments, the subject of the constitution came at length to be regularly discussed before the Assembly. It was a stupendous undertaking this, to frame a constitution for a vast and heterogeneous country like France. It was not a question of reforming or remodelling, but of pure creation. Twelve hundred legislators, selected from the various classes of society, had this task to perform, of giving the French people such a form and structure of government as appeared to them best adapted to their habits and wants. It may be said that every theory known

in ancient or modern times was open to their choice ; but in truth the current of ideas was irresistible in favour of a limited monarchy. At the time of the election of deputies to the States-General, the members were regarded in the light of delegates rather than as representatives, and were all furnished with instructions (*cahiers*) by which their votes were to be regulated. One of the first acts of the commons, after constituting themselves the National Assembly, was to annul the obligatory force of these instructions, which it was obvious would impede the course of legislation, and to declare that each deputy was at liberty to vote on questions that might arise solely according to his conscience. Nevertheless, a committee was appointed to analyse the instructions, and it was found that they were unanimous in behalf of a monarchical government. The same feeling was equally paramount in the Assembly, which would have scarcely tolerated the hint of a republic, but with very different shades. As was natural after victory, the Assembly had split into parties. At present, there were three decided sections of opinion : first, the royalist and aristocratic party ; secondly, the moderate party ; and thirdly, the popular party ; answering pretty nearly, by way of illustration, to the old party definitions in England, of Tory, Whig, and Radical. These had all their leaders, men endowed with manifold accomplishments. The Abbé Maury, a member of the clergy, and M. de Cazales, a member of the nobility, were at the head of the first, which, for distinction, was called the *Coté-Droit*, or Right Side, from sitting on the right hand of the president. They were both endowed with remarkable courage, which they evinced on several occasions amid scenes of tumult and violence. The Abbé Maury was a speaker of great eloquence and force, but diffuse, and apt, in close reasoning, to degenerate into sophistry. Cazales, a dragoon officer, was frank, ready, and effective, happy equally in his style and in his argument. Upon these two bold advocates had devolved the weight of upholding the cause of the king and the aristocracy, which had been so shamefully forsaken at the first looming of danger by more elevated guardians. The second party, which became known as that of the *Monarchists*, embraced chiefly the friends and admirers of Necker, and was led by Mounier, Lally-Tollendal, and Clermont-Tonnerre. Mounier was possessed of ability and industry, but was distinguished chiefly for the positive and unyielding nature of his character. Lally-Tollendal and Clermont-Tonnerre, both members of the high nobility, had hitherto been prominent in support of the national cause. They were both gifted with eminent talents, and an animated, persuasive flow of oratory. The third party, denoted commonly the *Coté-Gauche*, or Left Side, was by far the most numerous, and counted as its leading members Barnave, the two Lameths, and Duport. These were all young men of gentle birth, ardent in tem-

perament, sanguine in hopes, full of lofty aspirations, and highly educated ; the very types of the young generation of the middle class in France at the time. Above all these towered the giant Mirabeau, who ruled the whole Assembly with despotic influence. He was a man, if ever such there were, made for a revolution. Commanding in intellect, in person, and in voice, he never spoke but he carried his hearers with him. Though broken in reputation and fortune, he was proudly conscious of his superiority, and scorned to ally himself with any set of men. He stood aloof from party ties, and seemed to embody in himself the might of the whole nation. The idol of the people, he was viewed with execration by the court and the aristocracy, though he would have saved both from utter ruin if his counsels had been heeded. Great as was his capacity, equally great were his passions and vices. It was a saying of his, that the petty moralities were destructive of the greater ; meaning that the scrupulously-demure were incapable of acting as vigorous and enlightened statesmen. He was insatiate of money to supply his dissolute extravagance, and though by instinct and position an enemy of power, he might have been bought to prop it. But discarded by his own order, on his arrival at Versailles, he was shunned as an outcast, and his advances rejected. ' They shall hear of me then ! ' he cried in scornful anger ; and he was true to his word.*

The debates on the constitution served to bring these parties into hot collision. After much vain discussion, it was decided that a declaration of rights should stand at the head of the constitution. Lafayette had been the first to recommend this preamble, in imitation of the Americans, whom he so exceedingly adulated. It was unnecessary, being a mere enunciation of general principles,

* So early as the end of May 1789, Mirabeau made an overture to Malouet, a friend of Necker, offering, through him, to support any reasonable plan of the minister's, as he foresaw the Assembly would be urged to extreme measures, both by its own inexperience and arrogance, and by the opposition of the court and aristocracy. It was the egregious blunder of the court party that no initiatory plan was prepared, which at the first meeting of the States-General, before time was given for an opposition to be organised, might have been carried into effect. Malouet consented to arrange an interview between Mirabeau and Necker. The rest of the anecdote he can relate in his own words. ' I found M. Necker and M. de Montmorin extremely averse to any intercourse with Mirabeau, from his immorality, his character, and the little confidence he merited. I contended against all these objections ; I represented that the man who, with great talents, announced honest views—who, notwithstanding his immorality, did not appear to have yet engaged in any party, and would give great weight to that which he should embrace—deserved to be heard. It was agreed that M. Necker should receive him the next day ; and the conference took place. But Mirabeau expected they would open themselves to him, whereas they had only consented to hear what he had to say. He waited for the communication of a plan, and it is probable they had not one to communicate. The conference, accordingly, was dry and short. He went away discontented, and said to me as he came into the Assembly hall, *I go there no more, but they shall hear of me.* There ended our intercourse, and I was two years without speaking to him.'—*Malouet's Collection of Opinions*, vol. iii. p. 25.

afterwards applied in the details of the constitution itself; and pernicious, from the extravagant notions it gave the people of their rights, without any corrective as to their duties. Abstract propositions are unsuited to the capacity of the unlettered, and become dangerous in their mouths, as rallying cries of sedition. Still, the idea of a preliminary basis for a charter of liberties was not preposterous; and this having been fixed, the fabric was next to be reared. Herein lay the difficulty. All agreed that there should be a king, but differed as to the extent of power to be allotted him. They were at variance also upon the question of having one or two legislative chambers. The ideas touching a limited monarchy were very vague at this period in France. It is an institution essentially the growth of time, undergoing numerous fluctuations and modifications ere it is definitively settled, not only in its spirit and forms, but also in the habits and manners of the people. It is suited only to a community advanced in civilisation, and inured, to a certain extent at least, in self-action. The French had just burst the bonds of despotic authority, and in the first wildness of emancipation, they may be pardoned if they were betrayed into some errors and absurdities. The axiom which had all at once taken possession of their minds, and which was repeated from one end of the kingdom to the other, being one of the positive aphorisms of the Abbé Sieyès, was, that *the nation wills, and the king executes*; or, in other words, that the king was the mere instrument of the national voice. Hence, save a protest from the Côté-Droit, it was promptly determined that the king should have no power but what he derived from the legislature, nor exercise the privilege of initiating laws. But how was the nation to express its will? Through its representatives, convoked in one or two assemblies. The natural distinctions of society, the example even of republics both ancient and modern, and the subsisting divisions of orders in France, seemed to point to the establishment of two chambers—a senate and a popular assembly. This was the opinion of Mounier and the monarchists, who, in concert with Necker, would have transplanted the British constitution entire to the soil of France. The popular party contended, on the contrary, for one chamber, arguing that no intermediate check should exist between the crown and the nation. The time, in truth, had passed for the British constitution to be taken as a model, but Mounier and his friends maintained a vehement struggle in its behalf. Barnave at length proposed a compromise. He offered to concede an upper chamber, on condition that the king and it jointly should exercise but one right of sanction, and that the king should not possess the prerogative of dissolving the parliament. This Mounier, with characteristic obstinacy, rejected: truth was sacred in his eyes, and he would have all or nothing. Incidental to this question arose that of the royal

sanction—namely, what degree of power the king should retain of refusing to confirm decrees. According to the strict interpretation of the axiom, ‘the nation wills, and the king executes,’ he was bound to receive the law from the Assembly or Parliament, and put it in execution without interference on his part. But the arguments of the monarchists had some weight when they maintained the necessity of the executive power being allowed co-operation in the enactment of laws, and the popular party limited its views to what was called the *suspensive veto*, whereby the king had power to withhold his assent only until the following session, when, if the same measure were presented to him, he must accept it. The Côté-Droit and the monarchists upheld the *absolute veto*—namely, the right of the king to reject any laws he thought fit. The debates on these questions were carried on with great warmth, and the galleries of the Assembly were filled with an excited multitude, who hooted and applauded the different speakers with a violence almost sufficient to extinguish the freedom of debate. Many of the members were so intimidated, that they did not venture to vote, and when a division was taken on the question of one or two chambers, only 99 voices were recorded in favour of the latter, against 498 in favour of the former. On the subject of the veto there was a larger muster, and the numbers were more nearly balanced. The suspensive veto (extended to two sessions) was carried against the absolute veto, by a majority of 673 to 355. Moreover, the dignity of king was declared hereditary in the reigning family, and his person inviolable.

Such were the primary provisions of the constitution, which was to be completed in its multitudinous details with leisure and deliberation. The power and influence of the crown were reduced to a mere shadow, standing as it did in naked helplessness against a jealous and exacting democracy. It is useless now to speculate upon what might have been the issue of the Revolution if the aristocratic element had been infused into the constitution, and an upper chamber of nobles and prelates instituted. Such an establishment was sheerly impossible at the time, so rapid had been the progress of purely democratic ideas within the brief but fertile interval between May and September; and if it had been attempted, it could have opposed no impediment to the revolutionary torrent which swept over so many more formidable obstacles. Mirabeau, with his monarchical prepossessions, was sensible that such a barrier was advisable against the encroachments of a popular assembly, but he saw it could not be raised with any hope of permanency, and he gave his potential voice in favour of an undivided legislature. Yet he strove to strengthen the hands of the king as much as possible, and he supported the absolute veto, without, like its other advocates, thereby forfeiting his popularity. Considering the little substantial difference between the suspen-

sive and the absolute veto, since the resistance of the king could never be more than temporary, it is surprising that the question was viewed as so important both in the Assembly and by the people without. Paris especially was thrown into a violent ferment by the agitation of the subject. The most exaggerated notions of the nature and effect of the veto prevailed amongst the populace generally, insomuch that it was supposed to involve not alone the liberty, but the very existence of the nation.* The Palais-Royal was still the focus of riot and disorder; meetings were continually held in it, at which the most inflammatory speeches were delivered, and resolutions passed. Camille-Desmoulins, and a madman calling himself the Marquis de St Hurugue, who had been long confined in the Bastille, appeared as the principal orators and ringleaders. Deputations were sent to the Commune, calling upon it to convoke the districts, in order that the veto might be condemned, and the Parisian deputies who supported it cashiered and replaced. A mob of some fifteen hundred, headed by St Hurugue, even took the road to Versailles to catechise the Assembly, but Lafayette succeeded in stopping the procession, with the aid of the National Guards. Threatening letters were received by Mounier and other members of the Assembly, couched in diabolical language, which were read by them from the tribune, amidst the shouts and hootings of the people in the galleries.† However, through the firmness of the Commune of Paris, which committed St Hurugue to prison, and the satisfactory settlement of the question, the ferment subsided without any particular excesses being perpetrated.

With regard to its own acts, the National Assembly took care to render the veto of the king little more than illusory. That body had recognised itself to be intrusted with the one great mission of framing a constitution for France, and whatever had reference to the constitution was deemed by it not to require the assent of the king, whose province was thus reduced to mere promulgation. Thus it had only to declare a decree of a constitutional character, to impose it upon his acceptance; a course pursued with regard to the decrees founded on the resolutions of the 4th August, which the king had at first hesitated to confirm. But

* Bertrand de Molleville says—'A man whom I asked what he understood by the suspensive veto, against which he was declaiming with violent imprecations, answered that if the *sipensive* (mispronouncing the word) should pass, the king and his ministers might hang whom they pleased. It was with some difficulty I convinced him of the contrary.'—Vol. ii. p. 14.

† One of these letters, addressed to the Bishop of Langres, then president of the Assembly, may be taken as a sample of the whole. It was thus written:—'The Patriotic Assembly of the Palais-Royal have the honour to make it known to you, that if the aristocratic faction formed by some of the nobility and clergy, together with 120 ignorant and corrupt deputies, continue to disturb the general harmony, and still insist upon the *absolute veto*, 15,000 men are ready to enlighten their country seats and houses, and particularly your own.'

this was attended with an evil which might have recoiled fatally on itself. It brought out the king's impotence too glaringly, and placed him in that position of coercion which it was now the wish of the court to render as flagrant and aggravating as possible, in order to overcome the reluctance of the king to quit Versailles, and take refuge in some fortress on the frontier. It had become evident that all hope of arresting the Revolution was at an end, unless by violent means, and the repugnance of the king to engage in a civil war was insuperable; but by being induced to withdraw from Versailles, and place himself in the midst of the army under Bouillé, he would be compelled, in spite of himself, to warrant steps leading inevitably to that result. Such was the reasoning of those attached to the cause of royalty, and they doubtless judged correctly. The only chance of restoring the old system of government was by recourse to civil war, and to effect that object, they were content to invoke so frightful a remedy. The flight of the king, therefore, at this period, would have led to some striking catastrophe; and if the army had proved faithful to his cause, he might have wreaked a signal vengeance for all the indignities he had been made to undergo. It was natural the idea should suggest itself to the mind of the king himself, who, mild and gentle as he was, could scarcely be expected to submit tamely to be stripped of every prerogative of royalty, and reduced to a mere pageant more insignificant than the president of a republic. The descendant of so long a line of warlike ancestry, and the inheritor of absolute power, might make a last decided effort to retrieve his authority, when he saw it was about to become irrecoverably lost. But, unhappily for himself, he was restrained by an apprehension almost as cogent as his dread of civil war. The Duke of Orleans had long been regarded by the court, rightly or wrongly, as aiming to supplant the king on the throne, or at least to be appointed lieutenant-governor of the kingdom. To attain this end, he was accused of fomenting all the disturbances that had taken place, chiefly with the view of frightening the king into this very flight which was so earnestly pressed upon him, in order to create the vacancy he aspired to fill. A feeling of strong animosity existed against the duke among the whole royalist party, which was largely partaken by the king, and still more so by the queen. To disappoint what were deemed the expectations of the duke, was therefore a cherished motive with both, and above all with the latter, one of whose many infirmities it was to be governed by a spirit of vindictiveness.* Thus distracted by conflict-

* She evinced an implacable resentment against all who at any time incurred her enmity. Lafayette was a striking instance, and also D'Espremenil, whom she never forgave for his opposition in the parliament of Paris, though from the first he joined the court against the tiers-etat in the States-General. She refused to solace him by any token of sympathy when lying on a bed of sickness. Weber says—'The opposition of M. d'Espremenil to all that the court proposed, what-

ing considerations, and swayed alternately by hopes and fears, Louis remained in constant vacillation, until the fatal hour came when all power of option was extinguished.

Paris still continued agitated. The scarcity of bread alone would have sufficed to cause riots and commotions among its inhabitants; but to this were added continual rumours about the king's intended departure from Versailles. These enraged the populace to fury, and the cry was speedily raised in the Palais-Royal and other places of resort, that the king must be brought to Paris. The regiment of French Guards, which had been incorporated in the National Guards, under the title of the Paid Guards, assembled, and resolved to proceed to Versailles, for the purpose of assuming duty at the palace. Lafayette was apprised of this intention in time to prevent its execution, and he sent an account of what had occurred to the minister St Priest, who communicated it to D'Estaing, the commander of the National Guard of Versailles. The latter, calling his officers together, laid Lafayette's letter before them, and it was agreed that the municipality should be urged to petition the king for a reinforcement of at least a thousand regular troops to defend the seat of government from invasion. To this the municipality acceded, with the sanction of the Assembly, and the king accordingly sent for the regiment of Flanders. The arrival of this regiment was attended with the most disastrous consequences. In the first place, it filled the Parisians with alarm, for they viewed it as the precursor of a large muster of forces to be employed in punishing their own seditions, and effecting a counter-revolution. They consequently clamoured loudly for its removal, insomuch that Bailly, the mayor, was induced to write to the minister at war, intreating him to send it away, as the only means of restoring tranquillity in the capital. In the next place, the court committed an indiscretion, which, albeit far from heinous in its nature, was visited with quick and merciless retribution.

The regiment of Flanders arrived at Versailles on the 23d September, and the officers of the king's Body Guards (the Gardes-du-Corps) invited its officers to an entertainment on Thursday the 1st October. In this there was nothing very unusual or surprising, the more especially as several officers of the Versailles National Guard were likewise invited; but the king allowed the entertainment to be given in his palace. The theatre was fitted

ever it might be, was so obstinate, and was so sure to be exhibited, that when the purchase of a new dress was proposed to the queen, or her intervention was solicited for any favour, she would exclaim with archness—"Oh, I must first know whether I should have the consent of M. d'Espremenil to that!"—*Mém.* vol. i. p. 279. It is also asserted, upon perhaps not the best authority, that she formed a list of all the lords and ladies who declined to dance at her marriage, on account of the precedence given to Mademoiselle de Lorraine, which she preserved in her cabinet, inscribed with the words, *I will remember these.*—*Soulavie*, vol. ii. p. 89.

up for the occasion, and the boxes were filled with ladies and spectators belonging to the court. Towards the end of the repast, when the guests were heated with wine, the king, accompanied by the queen bearing the dauphin in her arms, appeared in the midst of them. Loud acclamations instantly rent the air; swords were drawn from their scabbards, and the whole company arose, repeating in a thousand echoes the cries of *Vive le roi! Vive la reine!* The scene was of the most animated description; the grenadiers of the different regiments were introduced, the spectators in the boxes applauded and waved their handkerchiefs, whilst the musicians struck up the significant tune of *O Richard! O mon Roi! L'Univers t'abandonne!* White cockades were distributed, and assumed by the young soldiers, who received them from the ladies as guerdons of loyalty; whilst the national cockade was stated to have been, with studied indignity, trodden under foot. In the end, the king and queen were escorted to their apartments by the whole body of assistants in a promiscuous throng, and amidst the liveliest demonstrations of joy and attachment. A display of a similar character took place at a breakfast given by the Body Guards on the 3d October, when the queen was again present, and with strong emphasis expressed the delight she had experienced on the Thursday preceding.

The indignation caused by the report of these entertainments was boundless in Paris. They were even denounced in the Assembly. They were viewed as indications of a design to have recourse to military interference, and likewise as insulting to the sufferings of the people. They served to produce the explosion which had been long preparing. A spark was sufficient to fire the train. A young woman from St Eustache commenced the insurrection on the morning of the 5th October. Going into a guardhouse, she seized a drum, with which she began to perambulate the streets, beating it with all her might, and crying in piercing accents, *Bread! bread!* She was speedily joined by other women, who congregated from all quarters, and rushed with frantic yells to the Hotel de Ville. It was but seven in the morning, and scarcely any members of the Commune were present. The mob attacked the guards on duty with stones and pikes, put them to flight, and stormed the building. Some men had now mingled with the women, and among them Maillard, one of the heroes of the Bastille. They forced the doors, and overran all the rooms of the hotel, vociferating for bread and arms. Access was gained to the great bell, and the tocsin sounded, which put all Paris in commotion. Two women were on the point of setting fire to the papers, that had been heaped together, with the view of burning down the whole edifice, when Maillard interposed, and at the risk of his life wrested the lighted torches from their hands. He at length succeeded in drawing the crowd out of the

hotel, and attempted to harangue the women from the steps in front, but they drowned his voice with shouts of *To Versailles!*—*To Versailles!* He offered to lead them to Versailles, seeing no other mode of appeasing them; upon which they proclaimed him their captain, and forthwith moved off to the Champs Elysées, whence, after collecting several other contingents, they took the route of Versailles, to the number of 6000, preceded by drums, and followed by a company of the Bastille volunteers. Meanwhile the Place de Grève, which had just been evacuated by them, was filled with the National Guards and a vast assemblage of people, summoned hastily from the different districts by the pealing of the tocsin. The Commune had assembled, and was in deliberation as to what steps should be taken to suppress the tumult. Lafayette was present likewise, preparing despatches for the ministry, in which task he was interrupted by a deputation from the National Guards, demanding that he should lead them to Versailles. He descended to the steps of the hotel, and found this to be the universal cry. Furious imprecations were uttered against the Body Guards and the regiment of Flanders, which had dared to tread the national cockade under foot. Lafayette strove to calm the exasperated multitude, but in vain. For several hours he resisted the solicitations of his soldiers and the clamours of the populace to proceed to Versailles; he reasoned and expostulated, but was not heard beyond a few paces, so deafening was the uproar on all sides; his life was threatened if he did not yield; and at length he mounted on horseback, declaring he would await the orders of the Commune. Those orders he received, directing him to go to Versailles, as it was no longer possible to withstand the desire of the people. He thereupon gave the word to march, and was answered with a tremendous burst of acclamation. A certain degree of order was preserved in this inundation of Paris upon Versailles. The National Guards moved in columns, with artillery and baggage wagons; whilst the intervals between the battalions were occupied by the rabble of the faubourgs, armed with pikes, muskets, and every variety of weapon. On the way, Lafayette halted his army, and made it swear to be faithful to the king. He despatched a message also to the president of the National Assembly, assuring him of the fidelity of his troops, and that nothing would be done contrary to the law.

The Assembly had met this day at the usual hour of eleven in the forenoon, and proceeded to take into consideration the observations of the king upon the declaration of rights and the first articles of the constitution, which had been presented to him for his acceptance. According to the doctrine it had established, the king had nothing to do but to accept simply and unconditionally; and therefore it was held he transgressed his functions when he

submitted criticisms, instead of signifying his bare assent. The president was accordingly ordered to wait upon the king, and request his pure and simple acceptance. Mounier was president at the time, and as he was about to set out on this mission, a deputation from Paris was announced. This proved to be Maillard and the army of women, whose arrival caused the greatest surprise and consternation. Maillard appeared at the bar, accompanied by fifteen of the women. He represented the deplorable scarcity that existed at Paris, complaining that there had been no bread for three days, and said that they had come to demand some, and also to have the Body Guards punished for insulting the national cockade. He also asserted, what had been previously mentioned in the Assembly—namely, that a miller had received a letter, enclosing 200 livres, desiring him not to grind corn, and promising him a like sum every week. This alleged letter was considered a distinct proof of the truth of the accusations charged against the court and the aristocracy by mob orators, of wishing to starve the Parisians, by preventing flour from being introduced into the city. The Assembly itself seemed to encourage this belief, by sending repeated addresses to the king, beseeching him to take effectual measures for the better provisioning of Paris, whilst it was well aware he was doing all in his power to mitigate the evils of the scarcity, the effects of which none had more reason to dread than himself. Mounier replied to Maillard with some sternness, telling him that every means had been used to supply Paris with food, and that disturbance was not the mode of alleviating the dearth. Meanwhile the great body of the women had forced their way into the hall, and crowding upon the members, raised piteous lamentations for bread, mingled with imprecations against the Body Guards and the regiment of Flanders. The Assembly hastily resolved that the president should forthwith repair to the palace, and represent the calamitous situation of Paris to the king.

It was already past four o'clock. The king had been shooting at Meudon, but on intelligence of the army of women advancing from Paris, he hurried back to Versailles. The queen was in the gardens of Trianon, a place of recreation she visited for the last time, whence she was likewise recalled with all speed. Mounier was accompanied to the palace by the horde of women, who insisted upon following him to the presence of the king. With some difficulty he persuaded them to appoint a deputation of six of their number; but at the gates of the palace he was obliged to take in twelve with him. These the king received with the utmost kindness, and so won upon them by the sensibility he evinced at the relation of their wants, that one, a young girl of seventeen, overcome by her sensations, fainted. The king assisted to revive her, and as she retired, she begged to kiss his

hand ; but he saying, 'Nay, nay, you deserve better than that !' threw his arms around her, and kissed her lips. They returned to their companions outside, delighted with the reception they had experienced, and the benevolent promises of the monarch. But their story was not believed : the more furious of the mob exclaimed they had been tampered with, and raised the fearful cry, *To the lantern—to the lantern with them !* One of them was already seized, and garters tied round her neck to hang her at a lamp-post, when she was rescued by some of the Body Guards, and conveyed, with the rest of the deputation, into an interior court. Here they begged the king would give them a writing under his own hand, that the multitude might be satisfied of the truth of what they had related. This he consented to do, and sent them an order, signed by himself, for supplies of corn to be delivered in Paris. With this document they again issued forth, dancing and singing for joy ; and now the whole body of the women, acknowledging the goodness of the monarch, gave way to transports of gladness, and made the air resound with shouts of *Vive le roi !* These penetrated to the royal apartments, and filled the heart of Louis XVI. with satisfaction. He dismissed all thoughts of danger, and gave up the idea of retiring to Rambouillet, as he had at first resolved to do after consultation with his ministers.

This confidence of the king was fortified, if not inspired, by the positive assurances received from Lafayette that he could answer for the tranquillity of Paris. Lafayette had, in truth, egregiously miscalculated the extent of his influence over the National Guards and the populace, and had not doubted he would in the end prevail over the spirit of insubordination and revolt. With great sincerity and honesty of purpose, Lafayette was vain, and very apt to overrate his own importance. Thus he took upon himself to send the secretary of state, St Priest, such reports as completely dispelled the apprehensions of a serious outbreak in Paris, much more those of a march of 30,000 armed men upon Versailles. The accounts he transmitted whilst on the road were equally calculated to allay alarm, and encourage reliance upon the motives and disposition of the bands he commanded. Still, enough transpired in front of the windows of the palace to warn the king and his advisers of the dangers that impended. The Body Guards were first abused by the mob, and then assaulted ; one of their officers had his arm broken by a shot. Fearing the sanguinary consequences of a collision, the king sent orders to the Guards not to fire, and eventually to retire to their barracks. The National Guard of Versailles, which was also assembled at the palace, betokened an evident design to join the populace against the Guards, notwithstanding the recent attempt to create a cordial feeling between them. Accordingly, when the Guards withdrew

amid the hootings and imprecations of the mob, several shots were fired at them from the ranks of the National Guard, whereby some of them were wounded, and a horse killed. After reaching their barracks, threats were made of bombarding them with cannon, which induced their commander, the Duke de Guiche, to conduct them back by a circuitous route to the palace, where they were ultimately drawn up on the terrace beneath the apartments of the queen, on which they were secure from attack unless all the gates were forced.

Mounier, meanwhile, had not obtained from the king the acceptance he had been directed by the Assembly to solicit. Nine o'clock in the evening was appointed for him to attend and receive the definitive reply. The king continued in consultation with his council until ten, when he yielded to the necessity of the case; and, in the hope of calming irritation, gave the pure and simple acceptance required. When Mounier returned to the hall of the Assembly, he found it deserted by the deputies, and occupied by the women from Paris. These he acquainted with the king's acceptance of the constitutional articles, which gave them apparent satisfaction, for they remarked with hilarity they would now have plenty of bread. Shortly afterwards, the vanguard of Lafayette's army began to appear, and before any considerable number of deputies had reassembled, that general himself entered the hall. He addressed the president, and in reply to the inquiry what particular object had brought him and his assemblage to Versailles, he stated that, whatever were the motives of his army, it had sworn to obey the king and the National Assembly. After making this declaration, he proceeded to the palace, where he was immediately admitted to the presence of the king. He was still full of confidence in his own ability to keep in quietude this vast concourse swarming around the royal residence, and he infused such perfect security into the mind of the king, that he retired to rest, and directed all his household to do the same. The queen had been so agitated during the evening by the denunciations imprecated against her by the populace, that she remained up until two o'clock, and was only then induced with difficulty to lie down in bed. Nevertheless, she had positively refused to leave the king when urged to fly with her children, and heroically exclaimed she would share the fate of her husband, whatever it might be.*

The self-imposed responsibility of Lafayette was immense. He had to provide food and lodgings for the legions he had conducted,

* 'It was particularly against the queen that the insurrection was directed. I still shudder in remembering how the amazons, furies with white aprons, yelled they were intended to receive the entrails of Marie-Antoinette, of which they would make cockades; mingling these horrible threats with the most obscene expressions.'—*Mad. Campan*, vol. ii. p. 75.

and for the multitude of men and women who had poured in so many thousands into the small town of Versailles. Distributions of bread and meat had already been made among the first arrivals by order of the Assembly. Additional supplies were obtained, and the private inhabitants of Versailles generally extended hospitality to the Parisian National Guards. Some of the battalions were placed in the churches and public buildings, and one occupied the barracks of the Body Guards. The rabble of men and women passed the night in public-houses, or wherever they could find shelter, but very many sat round bonfires lighted in the streets, though it rained heavily throughout the night. At these fires portions of the horse that had been killed were roasted, and devoured by wretches, who danced and sang with savage gestures, uttering horrible exclamations of vengeance. The Assembly sat till four in the morning, discussing gravely the subject of a criminal code; the hall being filled with a boisterous crowd, who kept up such a din and uproar, that Mirabeau at last raised his stentorian voice and imposed silence, by one of those vehement apostrophes with which he was wont to electrify the Assembly. Lafayette did not complete his arrangements until five o'clock, when, wearied and exhausted, he threw himself upon a bed and went to sleep; a fatal slumber, which has subjected him to never-ending reproaches and denunciations!

At half-past five in the morning, just about daybreak, several of the most ferocious ruffians who had come from Paris, some of them disguised as women, began to creep towards the palace. They were all armed with pikes and muskets. Upon their appearance, the file of Guards on duty turned out of the guard-house, and proceeded to the courts and vestibules of the palace. Only two sentries were stationed at each gate, and they had orders not to fire, even if attacked. At six, by which time the crowd of assailants was greatly increased, an assault was made on the gate leading into the royal court, one of the Guards killed, and the other put to flight. An atrocious villain, well known in the Revolution under the name of 'the head-cutter,' who wore a long beard, and always carried an axe, chopped off the head of the murdered sentinel, and hoisted it on the end of a pike. The mob soon forced its way through the inner court to the foot of the great staircase, and finding no obstacle, rushed up it howling like beasts of prey. On the balustrade, some eight or ten of the Body Guards attempted to resist the torrent, but were obliged to give way, and retreat into the apartment called the Queen's Hall, the door of which they had fortunately time to close and barricade. But this impediment was speedily battered down, and the raging multitude poured into the room with frightful yells. 'The queen's head!' 'We'll have her heart!' were the shouts of this barbarian horde. The Guards retreated, and sought shelter behind

another door; but one of their number was not quick enough. He was seized, and stabbed in a thousand places, and his body almost literally torn to pieces. The murderers approached the door that led to the apartments of the queen. Seeing them take this direction, a Guardsman, Miomandre de St Marie by name, regardless of his own danger, flew to the door, half-opened it, and cried with all his force, 'Save the queen! The tigers are already here!' Then shutting the door, he planted himself before it, and for a few moments, single-handed, held the ruffians at bay. He was felled to the ground with the butt-end of a musket, and, streaming with blood, left for dead. Fortunately, the queen's attendants had not gone to bed. Filled with gloomy presentiments, they had disobeyed her orders, and sat up all night, seated against the door of an antechamber. A weak barrier they formed, it was true; but listening with solicitous ears, they heard the timely warning of the devoted Guardsman, and ran to awaken the queen. Startled from sleep, she was told of the imminent peril that threatened her, and springing out of bed, she ran, undressed as she was, towards the king's apartment. She and her flying maids were stopped in their progress by a door fastened on the other side. What an agonizing moment! They scream and knock, and it is opened to them. The king had been early roused by the noise, and hastening to the queen's bed-chamber by a different passage, entered it a moment after she had left it. He returned to his own room, where he found the unfortunate Marie-Antoinette weeping over her children.* She expected immediate death, and prepared to receive it with firmness. She clad herself in regal apparel, determined to meet her assassins as became a queen, in the imposing array of majesty. The brigands would have certainly killed her if they had caught her; they did, in fact, penetrate to her chamber, and satiated their brutal rage at her evasion by cutting and slashing at the bed she had so lately quitted. Their further progress, however, was arrested. The French Guards—now part of the Parisian National Guard—had been already assigned, according to their wish, their old posts at the palace, and they now hurried to its defence. They rescued several of the Body Guards from the hands of the mob outside, as they were being led to be hanged; and they proceeded to clear the palace itself of the murderers within. In this they were assisted by a detachment of the National Guard, and Lafayette shortly arriving in person, those monsters were dispersed and expelled. On his road to the palace, Lafayette had met a horde of the brigands dragging along several Guardsmen,

* An interesting anecdote is related of the little dauphin at this moment. Being hungry, he importuned the queen for food. 'Wait,' said she, 'until the tumult is over.' 'Is yesterday, then, not finished, mamma?' the child asked, looking earnestly in her face.

with the intention of hanging them at the lamp-posts on the Place d'Armes. He interfered to save them, but was answered with growls and threats. One man raised his gun and aimed it at his head. In a commanding accent he ordered him to be seized and brought to him. The mob obeyed, and dashed out the man's brains at the feet of his horse. The Guardsmen were released; and, such the fickle nature of these barbarians, they now struggled to embrace the very men they were intent but a moment ago to slaughter. They changed their vindictive oaths to joyful cries of *Vive Lafayette!* *Vivent les Gardes-du-Corps!*

Lafayette hastened to the presence of the king, to assure him that all danger was past. A vast multitude still surrounded the palace, and raised shouts for the king to show himself. He appeared at the window, accompanied by the general, and was greeted with cordial cries of *Vive le roi!* The queen was next demanded, and she was led to the balcony by Lafayette. She was received with murmurs; but Lafayette stooping and kissing her hand, the act struck the imagination of the giddy populace, and she was immediately hailed with acclamations. Lafayette then took a Guardsman to the balcony, and throwing around him his own shoulder-belt, embraced him. This was sufficient to seal the reconciliation with the Body Guards, which was testified by renewed plaudits. But these were suddenly succeeded by a cry of 'The king to Paris!' It was echoed by all the assembled thousands. The king scarcely hesitated to yield. He would have consulted the National Assembly, but, at the instance of Mirabeau, that body determined it was derogatory to its dignity to attend the monarch at his palace. Thus left to himself, and quite defenceless, he declared his readiness to remove to Paris, provided his family was allowed to accompany him, for the queen had exacted a solemn promise from him that he would not consent to be separated from her.* No objection was made to so reasonable a condition; and it was communicated to the multitude that the king would set out for Paris at noon. Vociferous were the manifestations of joy at this announcement, for it had long been the wish of the Parisians that the king should reside in the capital. They expected two chief benefits to flow from it—a greater abundance of provisions, and the better security of the king's person. Upon being apprised of the king's intention, the Assembly resolved

* The spectre of the Duke of Orleans sitting in his place still haunted the imagination of Louis XVI., and influenced his decision. Bertrand de Molleville, who was deep in the secrets of the court, says, 'The principal motive that determined their majesties to take so hazardous a resolution, was the positive intelligence they received that the agents of the Orleans faction, who directed all the motions of the brigands and rebels, were at that time employing the most active manœuvres to have the Duke of Orleans instantly proclaimed king, if Louis XVI. should refuse to comply with the pretended wish of the capital.'—*Annals*, vol. ii. p. 137.

that it must follow him to Paris, and appointed a hundred of its members to proceed thither in his train.

It was one in the afternoon ere the king took his departure from Versailles. In the coach with him were the queen,* the dauphin, the princess-royal, Monsieur the king's brother and his wife, the Princess Elizabeth, and Madame de Tourzel, governess to the dauphin. The hundred deputies of the National Assembly followed in carriages. In front and in the rear marched the National Guard, the regiment of Flanders, the regiment of Cent-Suisses, and some straggling Guardsmen, without hats or arms, and with their clothes torn. Many of the populace had left before the procession started; but a great number still remained, and surrounded the carriage of the king. They were chiefly women, intoxicated with wine and excitement, who sang ribald songs, and used insulting language towards the queen. The heads of the two murdered Guardsmen were borne on the ends of pikes, but by the mob in advance of the king, and not immediately before his carriage, as has been often alleged. Thus this extraordinary procession moved forward on the road to Paris—soldiers, women, brigands, mingled together in a promiscuous concourse, shouting, blaspheming, quarrelling, with colours flying, drums beating, weapons clashing, guns firing. In the midst was the king, with a melancholy expression of stupor on his countenance. The queen was more collected, and preserved an air of dignity befitting greatness in misfortune. As they passed through the villages, the women pointed to the king's carriage, and shouted to the bystanders, 'Courage, my hearties! We sha'n't want bread any more; we bring you the baker, the baker's wife, and the baker's boy.'†

Six tedious hours were consumed in this most sorrowful journey. The king was received at the barrier by the mayor, and conducted to the Hotel de Ville, where he alighted, and, accompanied by the queen, ascended to the hall in which the representatives of the Commune had assembled to meet him. After the acclamations which his presence excited had subsided, the president of the Commune delivered an address couched in exaggerated language of loyalty and affection. 'However ardent the senti-

* 'I saw her majesty in her cabinet an instant before her departure for Paris. She could scarcely speak; tears poured down her face, to which all the blood in her body seemed to have mounted. She did me the favour to embrace me, and gave her hand to M. Campan to kiss, saying to us, "Come immediately to take up your abode in Paris: I wish to have you reside in the Tuileries. Come, and leave me no more: faithful servants in such moments become useful friends. We are utterly lost—dragged probably to death: captive kings are always very near it."—*Mad. Campan*, vol. ii. p. 84.

† 'I witnessed this heart-breaking sight—I beheld this ominous procession—I saw in the midst of this tumult, of these clamours, of these songs, interrupted by frequent discharges of small arms, which the hand of treachery or of awkwardness might have rendered so fatal—I saw the queen preserving the most undaunted tranquillity of mind, an inexpressible air of nobleness and dignity, and my eyes filled with tears of admiration and grief.'—*Bertrand de Mollerville*, vol. ii. p. 145.

ments that fill our bosoms,' he said, 'we will not presume to say that your choice has led you to those of your subjects who love you most; but when an adored father is called upon by the desires of an immense family, he must naturally prefer the place in which the greatest number of his children are collected.' The king, who was quite overcome by the events of the day, requested the mayor to repeat the answer he had already given him. It was to this effect: 'It is always with pleasure and with confidence I find myself among the inhabitants of my good city of Paris.' Bailly, in reciting it, omitted the words 'and with confidence,' whereupon the queen, in an audible tone, reminded him of them. 'Gentlemen,' cried the mayor with happy readiness, 'this is more gratifying to you than if I had myself repeated the words.' Enthusiastic cheers testified to the appositeness, if not the verity, of the observation. Yet each party must have felt the other's language hollow and insincere; but the truth must be dissembled at times, or shrouded in hyperbole; especially, it would seem, on occasions of intercourse between monarchs and their subjects.

The palace of the Tuileries was assigned for the future residence of Louis XVI. and his family. It had not been used as a royal abode for nearly a century, and no time had been allowed to make the requisite preparations for their accommodation. The families who occupied it hastily removed, and left their furniture for the temporary service of the royal household. The king was received at the door of the palace by the secretary of state, St Priest, who apologised for not meeting him at the Hotel de Ville, by stating he was not aware he would proceed thither. 'I knew no more than you,' replied the king with a resigned sadness.

Such were the eventful days of the 5th and 6th October. The insurrection was general and spontaneous, not confined to the lower classes, but including the whole National Guard. The desire to have the king at Paris, to make sure of his person, was undoubtedly the leading idea, the prime motive, of the movement; but it was provoked, or at least accelerated, by the unfortunate entertainments of the king's Body Guards, assisted by the dearth of provisions. The royalist writers unanimously ascribe it to the machinations of the Duke of Orleans and Mirabeau; and certainly, in the inquisition afterwards held of the affair, several witnesses deposed to facts tending to implicate them. But those facts were very improbable; such as, that the duke was among the brigands on the staircase, and pointed out to them the door leading to the queen's apartments; and that Mirabeau went through the ranks of the regiment of Flanders distributing money among the men to debauch them. If they fomented the insurrection at all, it is clear they would take their measures much more secretly and adroitly. But the character of the event was wholly independent of them; neither its circumstances nor its issue were within their

guidance. In its effects, it operated as the second great phase of the Revolution; the capture of the Bastille had shattered the power of the crown; the storming of the palace of Versailles annihilated it, by making captive the person of the king. Henceforth he was a prisoner in the capital, and whatever might be done by others in his name, he at least must move as the Revolution impelled him, to be either its puppet or its victim.

CHAPTER III.

SITTINGS OF THE ASSEMBLY AT PARIS—SOLEMN IDENTIFICATION OF THE KING WITH THE REVOLUTION—NATIONAL FEDERATION—6TH OCTOBER 1789 TO 14TH JULY 1790.

During the days immediately following the king's removal to Paris, the inhabitants manifested an extraordinary joy and enthusiasm. It seemed as if all the old feelings of loyalty and affection towards their monarchs had revived, now that the seat of royalty was, after so long a time, again planted among them. The courts and garden of the Tuileries were crowded, both day and night, with people rejoicing as on the occasion of a jubilee. Continual acclamations resounded, expressive of attachment not only to the king, but also to the queen, the dauphin, and all the members of his family. These evidences of returning love affected Louis deeply: they were unexpected, and filled him with a gladness and confidence to which he had been long a stranger. Dissembling, or stifling the consciousness of the violence done him, he wrote a letter to the Assembly, intimating his satisfaction with the decisive testimonies of allegiance he had received, and inviting it to follow him, and continue its session in the capital. It removed thither accordingly, and on the 19th October opened its sittings in the palace of the Archbishop of Paris, until a more suitable place of meeting was provided. The king likewise issued a proclamation intended to tranquillise the provinces as to the circumstances which had led him to take up his abode in Paris, by assurances of his contentment thereat, and his reliance on the good spirit evinced by its inhabitants. He avowed, moreover, before all his people, that he sincerely hoped every aid and encouragement would be given to the National Assembly in its labours, 'so that, under the shelter of a happy constitution, France might soon enjoy those days of peace and tranquillity which she had been long deprived of by an unfortunate division.'

The provinces, in truth, had been thrown into great excitement

by this last insurrection of the Parisians and its signal success. In several of them, the nobility and members of the parliaments determined to make a final effort to resist the further usurpation of the National Assembly, and held meetings, in which resolutions of a hostile tendency were passed. The most considerable of these took place at St Mals in Brittany, and Toulouse in Languedoc; whilst in Dauphiné, Mounier, who had seceded from the Assembly in disgust, convoked the States, and sought to raise the standard of opposition. But such demonstrations were abortive, and ceased on a mere decree of the Assembly prohibiting any conventions of provinces or states until its pleasure regarding them had been pronounced. If the movement had been general throughout the kingdom, some stand might possibly have been made, but as it was, the great body of the nobility took fright, and fled with the blind precipitancy of a flock of sheep. There is no instance in history of so cowardly a desertion as this of a great cause by the degenerate *noblesse* of France. Either they despaired of retrieving their lost pre-eminence, or, with an irrational pride, refused to remain in their native land, shorn of those privileges which were to them the chief charms of existence, and reduced to an equality with their fellow-men. Moreover, they still disbelieved in the reality of the Revolution. They thought it an ephemeral outburst, which was so purely extravagant, as to be incapable of leading to the establishment of a new order of government. They derided the labours of the Assembly in the digestion of a constitution, viewing them as vain, and thrown away on an object at once farcical and fugitive. Hence, when they found the majority of the Assembly resolutely bent on achieving a serious work, they wished it to be what was in their eyes as monstrous as possible, so that it might arouse a general feeling of contempt and indignation. Therefore, with malignant stupidity, they argued it would be better to leave the evil to ripen, until it reached that wicked maturity which would excite the whole world to rise and crush it. Brief, then, would be their absence; triumphant and vengeful their return! So they boasted, with hollow exultation; not reflecting that duty and honour alike called upon them to avert, if they could, a terrible calamity from their country, and to rally round the captive monarch they affected so to venerate. Him they left to struggle with the whirlwind of popular passions, content that they were safe from the awful strife in guilty and inglorious exile.

But a devoted band of martyrs clung to the cause they deemed righteous, with a courage and tenacity deserving every praise. All were not poltroons among the nobility and clergy. The Côté-Droit still presented a respectable array of numbers when the Assembly mustered in its new hall, amid the turbulent population of Paris; and if its members at times conducted themselves with

impropriety,* they had the merit at least of keeping in the lists, and doing battle whilst yet a gleam of hope remained to cheer them in the combat. It is singular that the only party extinguished in the Assembly was that of the monarchists. Mounier had seceded, Lally-Tollendal emigrated, Clermont-Tonnerre and Malouet been absorbed in the Côté-Droit; so soon were the first advocates of the popular cause outstripped and pushed aside. Meanwhile the Côté-Gauche was strengthened by the defection of its opponents, and rendered more paramount than ever. But division, as is ever the case with a successful party, began to creep into its ranks. Mirabeau drew more apart from Barnave and the Lameths, who laboured to discredit him by rumours that he had sold himself to the court. This was to a certain extent true. Mirabeau plainly perceived that the total ruin of the monarchy was threatened, unless some effective barrier were raised to keep the spirit of democracy in check, and he justly thought that none could interpose such a barrier better than himself. With this persuasion, he was content to assist the court, not in paralysing the Revolution, but in arresting its too sweeping march. His bargain was derogatory only in the consideration: he did not barter his principles, but, on the contrary, bound the court to accept his, or at least to heed his counsels. He was not to forego his part of a popular tribune in the Assembly, for that would have endangered his popularity, and bereft him of his influence, whereby he could have been of no use. He might have aspired to the ministry, as his enemies alleged, for with the reins of executive power in his hands, he would have been in a position to act with that daring promptitude congenial to his mind; but it was requisite for him, in order that he might retain the great instrument of his superiority, to preserve the right of speaking in the Assembly, denied to the ministers. Whether with forecast on this point, or from a conviction that the ministers ought to be allowed to address the Assembly, it is certain that he did introduce a proposition to confer on them a deliberative voice in its debates. He met on this occasion with one of the very few rebuffs he ever experienced in the Assembly. Both sides concurred in repudiating his proposition; and so far were the feelings of enmity and jea-

* The Marquis de Ferrieres, in his picturesque memoirs, censures with great severity the conduct and behaviour of the nobles and bishops in the Assembly. He says, 'The bishops and nobles, firmly believing that the new order of things would not last, acted with a sort of impatience, as if determined to accelerate the catastrophe—the ruin of the monarchy, and their own with it. Combined with this senseless conduct, they manifested an insulting disdain both of the Assembly and of the people who attended its sittings. Instead of listening, they laughed and talked aloud; thus confirming the people in the unfavourable opinion they had conceived of them. All these follies arose solely from the mistaken notion of the bishops and the nobles, who could not persuade themselves that the Revolution was and had been long determined in the mind and heart of every Frenchman.'—Vol. ii. p. 122.

lousy aroused against him, that, on a motion by Lanjuinais, a member of the Côté-Gauche, this defeat was followed up by a decree, rendering the present deputies ineligible to the ministry. It was in vain that Mirabeau, in contemptuous allusion to the personal motives swaying the Assembly, exclaimed that such a restriction might be detrimental to the State, and ought at all events to be confined simply to him, Riquetti Mirabeau, deputy of the bailiwick of Aix. His sarcasms, generally so potential, were this time disregarded, and the prohibitory ordinance passed. So far as he was concerned, it was of no account, since the queen and the court harboured too inveterate a repugnance against him to have tolerated him as a minister, though willing to reap the benefit of his unavowed services.* Nevertheless, the queen had an interview with him, in which she paid him many flattering compliments, whilst on his part he impressed her with a full sense of his great superiority. They separated mutually pleased, and as he took his leave, Mirabeau stooped to kiss her hand, and exclaimed, 'Madame, the monarchy is saved!'+

* According to a passage in the Duchess d'Abrante's memoirs, a certain Count de Reb— was employed to conduct the negotiation with Mirabeau, and in due time reported to the queen, through a third party, that he had gained him. He subsequently waited on her in person. 'When he entered the royal cabinet,' says the duchess, 'the queen advanced towards him, her countenance beaming with pleasure. "The king will be gratified by your zeal, monsieur," she said to him; "but speak, had you a good bargain of this man? How much has he cost?" He replied that Mirabeau rejected proposals of a pecuniary nature, and demanded an appointment to the ministry. At this the queen reddened, and then turned deadly pale. She closed her eyes, and striking her forehead with her hand, exclaimed, "A minister! Make Riquetti Mirabeau a minister! Oh, never! Never will I allow the threshold of the king's council to be polluted by the footsteps of such a man!" She trembled with rage. "Let him have money—give him all he asks: but to make him a minister! Is it possible my friends can give me this advice?" She then paced the room with every mark of agitation, repeating the words, "A minister, forsooth! a minister!"'

† From the necessary secrecy observed in these delicate negotiations between the court and Mirabeau, there have been various statements as to their actual date. The fact is, that they occurred at different periods. From a writing found in an iron chest, after the storming of the Tuileries on the 10th August, in Mirabeau's own hand, and addressed to the king, which, although not dated, bears intrinsic evidence of having been composed about the end of 1789, it appears Mirabeau advised that Monsieur the king's eldest brother should be invested with a prominent share in the administration of the government. At the bottom of this paper are appended the following stipulations, in the handwriting of Monsieur, and signed by both the king and Mirabeau:—

'1st, The king gives M. de Mirabeau the promise of an embassy, to be announced by Monsieur in person to M. de Mirabeau. 2dly, The king, pending the fulfilment of this promise, will make to M. de Mirabeau a private allowance of 50,000 livres (£2000) a-month, to be continued for at least four months.

'On his part, M. de Mirabeau engages to aid the king with his knowledge, influence, and eloquence, in all that Monsieur judges advantageous to the welfare of the State and the interest of the king—two things that good citizens regard as inseparable; and in those cases where M. de Mirabeau shall not be convinced of the soundness of the reasons which may be given to him, he will abstain from speaking on the particular subjects.'—*Historical Notes by the Editors of Weber's Memoirs*, tome ii. p. 305.

What amount of money Mirabeau received under this agreement is uncertain,

After Mirabeau, the person of greatest consequence in France at this moment was Lafayette. He took little share in the proceedings of the Assembly, his time being occupied in the command of the Parisian National Guard. He was possessed of a truly upright mind, but by no means of a sound judgment. His intentions were at all times pure and sincere, though he was liable to be misled by the zealotry of his temperament. His position, it must be allowed, was difficult. More than any other man he stood, as it were, between the king and the people. Since the removal of the court to Paris, the National Guards alone did duty at the palace, and thus the security of the king's person was wholly in the hands of Lafayette. He was responsible to the nation for his safe keeping, whilst, by the royalists, he was reviled as the king's jailer. On him, too, devolved the maintenance of order in the metropolis. Hence, if his power was great, his duties were onerous and painful, subjecting him both to jealousy and opprobrium. Brought by his official station into frequent contact with Louis XVI., he often tendered him advice, and urged him, above all things, to give himself frankly to the Revolution, and in every action show that he heartily acquiesced in it, even to the discountenancing the sneers and threats of the imprudent courtiers about him.* The king acknowledged the advice to be just, but had not firmness sufficient to follow it. The queen was at hand to neutralise its effect, for to her Lafayette was most odious. She had conceived a mortal antipathy to him, and received even his respectful advances with repulsive haughtiness. She had rather lose the crown, she said, than owe it to M. de Lafayette.† Yet he strove to ameliorate the irksomeness of their situation,‡ and consulted

but in any important consequences it proved inoperative. A subsequent negotiation took place in March 1791, which might have led to striking results, as will be shown in due time.

* 'The royal family remained surrounded by a few hundred noblemen, whom duty or the most courageous fidelity still retained in France; but this fidelity was accompanied with so much hatred of the patriots, and so much foolish presumption, that it proved more hurtful than useful to their master. They were jealous of the National Guards who did duty in the palace; their everlasting derision and threats disgusted all the citizens honestly attached to the king.'—*Lavalette's Memoirs, Eng. trans., vol. i. p. 51.*

† 'The queen was accustomed to say that the passion for popularity condemned M. de Lafayette to lend himself indiscriminately to all the popular follies. Her aversion towards that general increased from day to day, and grew to such a height, that when he betokened a disposition to support the tottering throne, she would never consent to accept from him so great a service.'—*Mad. Campan, vol. ii. p. 127.*

‡ That this situation was sufficiently dolorous, may be judged by the following extract from a letter written during the first days of her residence at Paris, by the queen to the Duchess de Polignac:—'I have wept with anguish on reading your letters. You talk to me of my courage; it requires less to defy the horrors of my own state than to support our position, with all its sorrows, those of our friends, and of the faithful few who surround us. It is a very heavy weight to bear, and if my heart did not hold by such strong ties to my husband, my children, and my friends, I should wish to die. But I am sustained by you all; and

in everything, as far as he could, their pleasure and convenience. Warmly attached to a monarchy, and to the king himself, whose virtues he respected, and whose weakness he lamented, he often risked his popularity by measures taken on their behalf.

At this very time he adopted a step which exposed him to the attacks of the popular party. The Duke of Orleans was very generally believed, before the vagueness and improbability of the evidence against him was shown, to have been the instigator of the movement of the 5th and 6th October. At the instance of the court, which was eager to implicate him in so serious a charge, an investigation had been instituted by the Committee of Inquiry belonging to the Commune of Paris, with the view to an impeachment before the court of the Chatelet, a tribunal especially appointed for the trial of offences appertaining to the Revolution. This proceeding caused considerable excitement, inasmuch that Lafayette began to dread the outbreak of fresh disturbances. The removal of the Duke of Orleans for a time from Paris, and even from France, seemed to him indispensable to the maintenance of tranquillity. He accordingly prompted the king to offer him a mission to England, which he intimidated the duke into accepting. The friends of the latter strove to stimulate him to resistance; but failing to invigorate his courage, they applied to Mirabeau to denounce the violence committed by Lafayette upon a member of the Assembly. Mirabeau, who at once hated and despised Lafayette, willingly undertook the task, and was on the point of rising for the purpose, when he received a notification that the duke had actually departed, which provoked him to exclaim with indignation, 'The miserable creature; he does not deserve the trouble that is taken about him!' This expression has been interpreted to prove the existence of a plot in favour of the Duke of Orleans directed by Mirabeau himself. It was, in truth, a mere ebullition of hasty anger; for there is no proof, beyond the unsupported assertions of royalist writers, that Mirabeau was ever engaged in any confederacy with the Orleans party. The duke himself, so constant an object of suspicion and dread to the court, was one of the most pusillanimous and contemptible of men; and if ambitious views were instilled into him

especially do I owe this strength to your friendship.'—*Montjoie's Hist. de Marie-Antoinette. App.*

'When the royal family was suitably established in the Tuileries, the queen resumed her ordinary habits. She employed the forenoon in watching over the education of Madame (her daughter), who received all her lessons in her presence, and she executed large works in tapestry. Her mind was too preoccupied by the events and dangers with which she was surrounded, to be able to apply herself to reading; the needle was the only thing which afforded her some distraction. She received the court twice a-week before going to mass, and dined on those days in public with the king. The rest of her time she passed with her family and children; she had no concerts, and never went to the play, except in 1791, after the acceptance of the constitution.'—*Campan, vol. ii. p. 91.*

by parasites, it was chiefly with the view of inducing him to squander the wealth he so abundantly possessed,* for no design was ever effectively prosecuted tending to his exaltation. The conduct of Lafayette towards him was, however, deeply resented: he was stigmatised as a dictator, and accused of designing to play the part of Cromwell. In ridicule of his pretensions to probity and disinterestedness, which he really thought a sort of reproach to a public man, Mirabeau called him Cromwell-Grandison.

Mirabeau, then, ruling the Assembly, and Lafayette commanding the National Guard of Paris, and holding the king in custody, were the two great powers of the State, and upon them the fate of the monarchy mainly depended. By their union, a considerable share of power might yet be preserved to the crown; and if to them were joined the general of the regular army, the Marquis de Bouillé, all the forces, save that of the populace, would be arrayed in behalf of a constitutional monarchy, and the Revolution was concluded. But these three persons differed materially in character and principles, and they were alienated by mutual repugnance. Lafayette was earnest and ardent in his love of liberty; and, with the example of Washington before his eyes, he would have secured free institutions to his country, and then withdrawn into a glorious retirement. Mirabeau was friendly to liberty no doubt; for such a mind as his must have wide sympathies; but with his personal ambition and profligacy, and his innate horror of pure democracy, he might have been driven to uphold even despotism, if his own aggrandisement were linked with its restoration. Bouillé was inimical to liberty so called; not that he was an ultra-royalist, who looked upon a king as an emblem of the Deity; he was too sensible a man for that; but he regarded the executive power as the main ingredient of government, and abhorred the idea of a constitution which would impede its coercive action. He was stationed at Metz with from 25,000 to 30,000 men under his command; but of these he could not reckon upon the fidelity of more than a half; notwithstanding all his efforts, as he himself avows in his memoirs, to sow jealousy between the troops and the National Guards, and animosity between them and the people. Still, his position invested him with consequence, and his adhesion to any order of things would carry with it great weight. Conscious of this, Lafayette, who was his near kinsman, laboured diligently to form an understanding with him, in order that they might co-operate, and effect in concert a common object—the revival of order and tranquillity, and the

* According to a note at page 41 of the Marquis de Bouillé's Memoirs, the income of the Duke of Orleans amounted to seven millions and a-half (£300,000); and after the death of his father-in-law, the Duke de Penthièvre, he got an addition of four millions more, making eleven millions and a-half of francs in the whole, or £460,000 sterling; a prodigious income, considering the value of money in those days.

settlement of the monarchy on a firm basis. But Bouillé received his advances with coldness. Not only was he unable to overcome his distrust and aversion of Lafayette, but their views were totally irreconcilable. Lafayette feared the machinations of what he called the 'Faction' and the 'Orleanists,' and wished Bouillé to assist him in repressing them; but his condition was always the establishment of the constitution, which the latter detested. A long correspondence, nevertheless, was carried on between them both by messengers and letters; which, although affectionate in tone, as became relatives, was in substance vague and indecisive. Neither would volunteer an explicit statement of his designs, and the negotiation terminated without a result. Bouillé was more inclined to coalesce with Mirabeau,* and did in the sequel enter into a frank and direct intercourse with him, when, unfortunately for the cause of royalty, that mighty spirit was on the eve of dissolution. He partook, in fact, all the prejudices of the queen against Lafayette; and this union, which might, by timely arrangement, have wrought great changes in the course of the Revolution, was never seriously pressed by the court until the opportunity had passed, and the disaster was irremediable.

The removal of the court to Paris had not the effect fondly imagined by the populace of producing plenty. Despite all the exertions of the ministry and of the committees appointed both by the Assembly and by the Commune to superintend the supply of provisions, the dearth still continued, and occasioned outbreaks among the famished poor. Mobs of women besieged the bakers' shops, and perambulated the streets crying for bread. At length, on the morning of the 20th October, a baker, named Francois, being accused of concealing his bread, was conducted to the Hotel de Ville, followed by an immense crowd clamouring for his death. The charge was wholly false, and the Commune resolved to shield the man from violence. But the National Guards on duty were soon overpowered, and the building was filled with the furious multitude. Bailly and his colleagues endeavoured in vain to calm the tumult, and show the innocence of the baker: no remonstrances or testimonies were heeded: Francois was seized, dragged into the Place de Grève, and hanged at a lamp-post.† In accordance

* Bouillé assigns the following as his reasons for preferring Mirabeau to Lafayette. 'Some calculation might be made, founded on the ambition and cupidity of the former, whom the king, once resealed on the throne, might satisfy; and he had too much sense not to feel that the gratitude and benefits of a monarch, to whom he had contributed to restore authority and power, were preferable to popular favour and the precarious post of a party leader. On the other hand, Lafayette was an enthusiast and a fool, overflowing with egotism, the measure of which could be neither taken nor satiated; a sort of man the most dangerous, especially in a revolution.'—*Memoire*, p. 201.

† Bailly evinced a noble calmness amid this frightful scene, and rescued an imprudent colleague, whose literary vanity, uppermost even at such a moment, had betrayed him into danger. When the mob burst into the Hotel de Ville, a

with the horrible custom invariably observed on such occasions, his head was cut off, and borne on the end of a pike through the streets and public places. The Commune immediately sent a deputation to the Assembly to communicate this occurrence, and beg it to promulgate martial law, in which request Lafayette concurred. The Assembly, justly moved with indignation at the atrocity, at once yielded to the demand, and decreed martial law, whereby the civil authorities were empowered to use force against seditious assemblages after three warnings to disperse. The only member who opposed this measure in the tribune had been hitherto concealed in the mass. Henceforward he took a prominent part in the debates, more particularly as the apologist of popular excesses. His name was Maximilian Robespierre. For the first and last time in the Revolution, a murder by the Parisian mob was punished with the forms of justice. The fate of the baker, who was known among his neighbours to be a generous and charitable individual, excited universal commiseration. The king and queen sent his young widow a sum of 2000 crowns, with a message of condolence, and the Commune deputed some of its members to visit and console her. Lafayette scoured the faubourgs in search of the miscreant who had been most active in the crime; he discovered him, and delivered him for immediate trial to the court of the Chatelet. The proof was conclusive of his identity and guilt; he was condemned to death; and on the following morning, in company with another convicted of distributing handbills stimulating to insurrection, was hanged on the same Place de Grève, the scene of his own barbarity.

Shortly after the American war, the usage of *clubs* had been introduced into France, after an example taken from England. They were at first merely philosophical and literary, but had gradually become political, as the spirit of the nation was aroused by the agitation of exciting questions. They had doubtless prepared the way for that readiness, fortitude, and unanimity which, from the first day of meeting at Versailles, the tiers-etat had so strikingly exhibited. Subsequently, the system took a wider range, and embraced what were styled affiliations: a parent club seated

member of the Commune called Dusaulx, an elderly man, volunteered to confront and expostulate with the misguided people. Standing up on an elevated platform, he commenced a harangue. 'My friends,' he said, 'you see before you the translator of Juvenal.' At these words the whole people cried out with anger, 'Who is Juvenal? An aristocrat, of course. To the lantern with Juvenal! We want bread; will Juvenal give us any?' M. Dusaulx raised his voice to explain, but it was drowned in vociferous shouts of 'To the lantern! —to the lantern with Juvenal!' The mob surrounded and seized him; he was already on his way to the lamp-post, when Bailly rushed into the throng, and taking Dusaulx by the arm, said to his assailants, 'Dusaulx is my friend; I claim him.' Awed by his firm and tranquil demeanour, the brigands released their hold, and Bailly led away his colleague in safety. Dusaulx lived to requite the action. He assigned a pension to Bailly's widow when in distress.—*Berville's Life of Bailly, prefixed to his Memoirs, vol. i. p. 21.*

at Paris or Versailles had branches in the principal towns of France, with which a constant correspondence was maintained. This, it is evident, presented powerful means of influencing opinion and combining movements throughout the kingdom. The principal association of the kind had been hitherto the Breton Club, the organisation of which was chiefly managed by Duport, who first saw all the strength to be derived by a party wielding an engine with such manifold ramifications. Originally, the Breton Club was composed only of members of the Assembly; but it soon received a more general infusion, and after the removal to Paris, it was thrown open to citizens of every grade. Regular sittings were held, to which the public was admitted; debates were carried on in the same form as in the Assembly, and with equal regularity were published in the journals. From the place of its meeting in Paris having been a convent of Jacobin monks, its title was altered to that of the *Jacobin Club*. It was the resort of the ultra-liberals of the moment, and its most influential members were still Duport, Barnave, and the Lameths, who certainly did not dream of moulding an institution to accelerate the march of republicanism. The *moderates*, the middle portion of the Assembly, the bulk of the *Côté-Gauche*, had also their club, to which such men as Sieyès, Lafayette, and Chapelier belonged. For lack of a more expressive distinction, this was denominated the Club of 89. Mirabeau attended both of them indifferently. The royalists, the *Côté-Droit*, likewise set up an establishment of their own, which they at first sought to dignify with the title of the *Impartial*; but speedily recognising its impropriety, they converted it into the *Monarchical Club*, a name more fitted to denote its principles. The people, who are ever the most intolerant of opposition, viewed this association with malignity, and repeatedly interrupted its meetings, compelling it from time to time to change its locality, and assemble in secrecy. Thus was the institution of clubs made a component part in the existence of parties, operating with prodigious effect on the course of the Revolution. In process of time, the most violent and democratic—the Jacobin—overbore all the others, and rose to be a power in the State which first rivalled, and then controlled, the Assembly. Its direction slipped from the hands of its pristine founders, and passed into those of more forward demagogues.

Ever since his last return to the ministry, Necker had continued to decline in credit. Even in the administration of the finances he was unsuccessful—which could not be otherwise, in their inveterate derangement—and the Revolution had already left him stranded in the rear. He had tried to raise loans, the only resource left him with an exhausted exchequer and unpaid taxes, but capitalists had turned a deaf ear to his appeals. Specie was rapidly disappearing from circulation, the primary and inevit-

able consequence of a panic caused by disorders. Such was the growing destitution of the precious metals, that the king sent all the royal plate to the mint; private individuals imitated the example; and the names of the patriotic donors were, to foster the example, daily published in the papers. The clergy, through the medium of the Archbishop of Paris, made an offering of all the plate in the churches not absolutely requisite for the ceremonies of religion; women presented at the bar of the Assembly their prized baubles—earrings, chains, and jewels; deputations from towns and villages appeared with contributions of gold and silver vessels; and the Assembly itself, under the impulse of one of those fits of enthusiasm in which was mingled so much of both the sublime and the ridiculous, dedicated the silver shoe-buckles of its members to the service of the State. These donations, however, afforded but a slight alleviation of a deficit amounting to nearly 200,000,000 livres, and Necker could devise no other expedient than what was in fact a forced loan, though gilded with the name of a voluntary contribution, levied upon income after the rate of one-fourth. He proposed this to the Assembly in a long report explanatory of the state of the finances; and, both to support the alleged character of the measure, and to facilitate the collection, he recommended that each citizen should assess his own income, verifying his estimate with the simple affirmation, *I declare with truth*. Popular assemblies always listen to the proposal of increased burdens with distaste, and especially so to those of an extraordinary character and pressure; therefore it is not surprising that Necker's plan met with murmurs and opposition. It required all the force of Mirabeau's eloquence to induce the Assembly to adopt it. Never did he speak with such tremendous power as on this occasion. He delivered two orations: the first deprecatory and argumentative; the second declamatory. He exhorted the Assembly to confide in the knowledge and ability of M. Necker, since it was less competent than he to decide questions of finance—had not sufficient time to examine the proposition maturely—and was called to other yet more important labours; for all which reasons, he urged that the whole responsibility should be thrown upon Necker alone, and his project voted *in confidence*. The eulogium he passed upon Necker, and the ardour with which he supported his scheme, appeared, from his known enmity to the minister, somewhat strange and suspicious. Several deputies hesitated not to charge him with harbouring insidious designs against the reputation, if not the life and fortune, of Necker. In reply to insinuations or attacks, Mirabeau was always triumphant. Again mounting the tribune, he said, 'I have not the honour to be ranked among the friends of the minister at the head of the finances; but were I his most affectionate friend, I would not hesitate a moment, as the friend of

my country, above all, as a representative of the nation, to expose him rather than the National Assembly to any hazard. Such are my real sentiments; I never meant to deny or disguise them. Did our respect for public faith, our horror at the infamous word bankruptcy, rest on less solemn declarations, I might take upon me to investigate the secret motives—perhaps, alas! unknown to ourselves—which prompt us to stand aloof at a moment when we are called upon for an act of great sacrifice, certainly ineffectual if it be not taken immediately and with confidence. To those who familiarise themselves with the idea of violating public engagements through the fear of sacrificing too much, through the dread of taxation, I would speak thus: And what is bankruptcy but the most cruel, the most iniquitous, the most unequal, the most disastrous of taxes?’ He then proceeded to paint in glowing colours the horrors of national bankruptcy, which he likened unto a gulf swallowing up victims only to gape for more, and which, setting all classes of society in array against each other, led inevitably to anarchy and desolation. ‘Vote, then,’ he exclaimed, ‘this extraordinary subsidy, and may it prove sufficient! Vote it, because although you have doubts upon the means, you have none about its necessity at least, or as to our inability to provide a substitute. Vote it, because public circumstances admit of no delay, and because we should be liable to censure for rejecting it. Ask not for time; calamity can never afford it. A few weeks ago, on a ridiculous motion made at the Palais-Royal, you recollect that these violent words were shouted—*Cataline is at the gates of Rome, and you deliberate!* And yet we had about us no Cataline, no dangers, no factions, no Rome. But now bankruptcy, hideous bankruptcy, is here, and threatens to consume you, your fortunes, your honour; AND YOU DELIBERATE!’ Electrified by this peroration, the Assembly rose in a body, and voted the proposition amidst tumultuous acclamations.

It was ever with unwillingness that the Assembly entertained these questions of finance, for, independently of their inherent difficulty, they interfered with the great task of completing the constitution, and with other paramount avocations. To get rid of them by a bold and decisive stroke was the general inclination. The ‘voluntary contribution,’ notwithstanding the expectations formed of it, furnished but a very meagre item in the ways and means of the year; and in less than six weeks, Necker was again in difficulties. He presented another report, so lengthy, as to occupy two hours in reading, and in which he showed a deficit on the year of 170,000,000 francs, a vacuum he proposed to fill up by an emission of paper money to the extent of 240,000,000 francs, upon the security of the national faith, through the instrumentality of the *Caisse d’Escompte*, a banking establishment which had been often used by the government in its financial operations, and on that

very account in bad odour with the popular party. His proposition was rejected ; but the hint he suggested was treasured. The clergy of France possessed, in addition to tithes and other ecclesiastical dues, which had been abolished since the 4th August, an immense amount of territorial property. On this the leaders of the Revolution set their eyes, and inferred that it might be justly and beneficially seized for behoof of the State. These estates, they argued, had been granted, not to individuals, but for certain pious purposes ; and if the State took upon itself the fulfilment of those purposes, it was entitled to the endowments. By granting to each member of the clergy a competent stipend, according to his rank, the services of religion might be equally well performed, and the church itself made purer, and more in accordance with the primitive model. A great political purpose was also served by such a measure, as the order of the clergy would be thereby shorn of its material power, and the ecclesiastical body be reduced to a level consistent with the new order of things. But to the doctrine of the right of the State to appropriate the possessions of the church, the bulk of the clergy decidedly demurred. They were represented as sacred property, and dedicated to the especial service of God ; an argument controverted by the allegation that their distribution, far from tending to the good of religion, was deemed its greatest scandal, being made in such a manner, that enormous revenues were heaped on lazy prelates and dignitaries, whilst the really working clergy were left to pine in true evangelical poverty. Immense riches, therefore, were not needed to uphold the Catholic faith. Of this truth several of the clergy were themselves convinced ; and it was reserved for a distinguished member of the order, Talleyrand, Bishop of Autun, to recommend the act of confiscation itself in a report to the Assembly, wherein he enumerated at length all the advantages that would accrue from it—mentioning especially the subdivision of large estates among active and industrious proprietors, who would have every motive to improve their possessions ; whereas, accumulated in the hands of individuals who enjoyed only a life interest in them, they were neglected, and their fertility exhausted. This report was taken into consideration on the 23d October, and the debate upon its conclusions closed on the 2d November. The Archbishop of Aix, and the Abbé Maury, were the principal speakers on behalf of the clergy, and they struggled energetically in resistance to the measure. On the question of *property* they seemed to prevail in the argument ; and upon the motion of Mirabeau, the conclusion of Talleyrand, that the ecclesiastical possessions ‘belonged to the nation,’ was modified into, ‘are at the disposal of the nation.’ This resolution was carried by a majority of 568 to 346. A decree in accordance was framed and forthwith passed, charging upon the State the expenses of

divine worship, the maintenance of its ministers, and the relief of the poor, and providing that no parish priest should have an income of less than 1200 francs, exclusive of his manse and garden.*

To convert this immense mass of property by sales into funds immediately available, was impossible; but it might be hypothecated, and that in the form imagined by Necker of a paper currency. An extraordinary supply of 400,000,000 francs was estimated to be required to make up the deficiency on the years 1789 and 1790, and that amount of paper it was resolved to issue, specifically charged on the ecclesiastical property, henceforth called 'national domains.' The notes of this issue were denominated *Assignats*, and they had a forced currency, bearing interest at so much per day. The basis of this fabrication was good, if the inherent defect of title to the property on which it was allocated were overlooked, because the assignats might always be used to purchase lands; and thus if the creditor of the State had faith in the success of the Revolution, he might pay himself by an advantageous investment. But this faith was wanting among capitalists, and they alone could afford to buy land to any extent; consequently the sales of national domains were few and insignificant. The clergy, too, strained every nerve to prevent alienations, by alarming the consciences of intending purchasers, and thundering anathemas against all who invaded what they scrupled not to call 'the patrimony of God.' Nevertheless, the assignats were put into circulation, and became the money of the Revolution, which they long served to sustain. Subsequently, by excessive issues, they were utterly discredited; but they proved not the less an invaluable resource, without which it is difficult to suppose how any circulating medium could have obtained in France during her many years of convulsion and isolation. It was a measure, therefore, at once sage, politic, and daring on the part of the revolutionists, who reasoned with all the sternness of philosophy, and acted with the vigour and hardihood of determination.

Thus was the proud Gallican church, which had so often defied the might of popes and monarchs, stripped naked, and crushed by the inexorable force of the Revolution. Its fate may excite com-

* This confiscation of the property of the clergy by the revolutionists of 1789 exposed them at the time to the accusation of sacrilege, which has been often repeated since. They had an example, nevertheless, furnished by no less a personage than the sovereign of the conservative monarchy of Austria. The Marquis de Bouillé, who visited his court in the year 1784, says, 'The Emperor Joseph seized upon the riches of the clergy by way of correcting their abuses: he suppressed several religious houses and chapters, appropriating their revenues, as well as part of those of the bishops and abbots, whom he judged too wealthy. He established a treasury of religion, to contain the funds resulting from the spoils of the clergy, and even of the churches, having seized the treasures of several. This treasury of religion soon became a military chest.'—*Memoirs*, p. 31.

miseration, but scarcely regret. Its dignitaries had ever shown themselves refractory, indifferent to the exigencies of the State, and animated solely by a spirit of selfishness. Forming an independent body—a sort of republic within the kingdom—they had repudiated all schemes of reform or amelioration, and steadily refused to bear any share of the public burdens. Nominally, they did contribute to the expenses of the State, but in reality not so. As they always evaded every effort to ascertain the yearly value of the church property, their *decimes*, or tenths, which by prescription they were bound to pay, had been, by arbitrary approximation, fixed at 10,000,000 francs per annum. In addition, they granted every five years what was called a free gift, usually amounting to 15,000,000 francs. But they did not assess and levy this sum upon themselves; they raised it by loan, the interest payable upon which was deducted from the annual decimes; so that, in 1787, when the notables were first convoked, the debt of the church, on account of this free gift, amounted to 160,000,000 francs, the interest on which absorbed the decimes within 3,000,000; and as the king defrayed ecclesiastical charges to the extent of four millions and a-half, it resulted that the church, richly endowed as it was in lands, tithes, and dues, actually cost the State a million and a-half yearly. Yet the clergy, in the Assembly of the Notables, were the most obdurate in resisting the instances of the minister to afford relief to the necessitous exchequer, though their territorial property, as was afterwards proved, at that time yielded a revenue of 180,000,000 francs. Such conduct might be pardoned as infatuation, if it had not sprung from base and truculent motives; as it was, it brought down upon them a prompt and terrible retribution, fraught with an instructive lesson to perverse haughtiness and cupidity.

The Assembly turned from the perplexing subject of finance to the more congenial task of digesting the constitution. A hereditary king, and a single legislative chamber, had been already established. The title of the monarch was changed from that of King of France and Navarre to that of King of the French,* on the ground that he was the chief of men, and not the lord of the soil. It remained to regulate the internal administration, the electoral basis, and the judicial organisation.

France had been hitherto divided into provinces, thirteen in number, most of which having been independent states, and incorporated at different periods, possessed various franchises and immunities, and stood quite distinct and separate from each other. The king of France, in fact, was not so much the monarch of a united kingdom, as of thirteen disjointed principalities. Some

* It is singular that this title was first used by the assembly of the clergy, convoked by the Archbishop of Toulouse during his ministry, in the address of remonstrances presented to the king.

of these had peculiar assemblies of their own called *states*; others, being the greater number, had none: the first were styled *countries of states* (*pays d'états*); the latter *countries of elections* (*pays d'élections*). The pressure of taxation varied considerably in the two orders of provinces. The *pays d'états* contributed specific sums in lieu of imposts, compositions fixed on very favourable terms; the *pays d'élections* were harassed by all the vexations of a rigorous collection of the taxes. Such discrepancies it was not the genius of the Revolution to allow to subsist. Equality and amalgamation were its great aims; and with their usual boldness of decision, its leaders resolved to level all the ancient landmarks of the country, and describe other circumscriptions in their stead, better adapted for the new principle of self-government. France was accordingly divided into eighty-three departments, nearly equal in extent and population, and carved with reference to natural boundaries. Each department was subdivided into districts, each district into cantons. The department had an administrative council composed of thirty-six members, and an executive directory composed of five. The district, in like manner, had its council and directory upon a more diminutive scale. The canton was an electoral division only, embracing, according to circumstances, five or six parishes. In this distribution, the smaller circle held of the immediately larger—the canton of the district, the district of the department, the department of the State. The arrangement was scientific and admirable, constituting a well-ordered hierarchy of authorities for the gestion, in their several gradations, of general and local affairs. It was the invention of Sieyès's precise mind, and is one of the few creations of the Revolution which has survived under all the forms of government undergone by France during the last half century.

The system of election pervaded the whole institution. Every male citizen who had attained the age of twenty-five years, and paid taxes equal to three days' wages, enjoyed the right of suffrage. He was called an *active* citizen, in contradistinction to a non-elect, who was called a *passive* citizen. But to obviate the danger of so extended a range of voters, an intermediate check was provided. The active citizens met in the canton, and nominated electors, possessing qualifications of property or occupation, and who, afterwards assembling in the district, chose the members of the National Assembly, and of the local councils of the department and district. They likewise appointed the judges of the land. A criminal court was assigned to each department, in which trial by jury was instituted. Civil justice was rendered speedy and economical. In every district was planted a court for the adjudication of suits, with an appeal to a superior court for the department; whilst a justice of peace sat in the midst of the canton to settle petty differences, reconcile litigant neigh-

hours, and dispense punishment to minor transgressors against the law. No qualification was requisite in those elected beyond the confidence of their fellow-citizens, which was held a sufficient passport to any office or dignity, however high or responsible.

The towns had a separate organisation. Each had a council-general and a municipality, the members of which were numerous or few, in proportion to the population. These were elected directly by the citizens in their several quarters. They administered the affairs of the town, and were alone entitled to authorise the use of an armed force for the suppression of civil broils.

All these important changes were not made by the Assembly without violent opposition. The provincial states and the parliaments protested loudly against the new distribution of the kingdom, and seemed intent upon a last trial of strength with the Assembly. But the attempt was vain; they were at once suspended, preparatory to their total extinction. The only effect attending their resistance, was to increase the excitement and disorder that prevailed throughout the whole of France. Disturbances were never more numerous than at this period. In addition to the general causes of agitation, the clergy took the field, to inflame the spirit of discord. Rendered desperate by the forfeiture of their property, they began to partake the feeling expressed by the emigrants, of preferring to see things pushed to the worst, hoping that from out the chaos of anarchy a system might emerge more propitious to them, and in which they might retrieve their wealth and station. The Bishop of Treguier, in particular, issued a pastoral charge to the priests of his diocese, in which, after stating 'religion is annihilated, its ministers are reduced to the condition of clerks salaried by brigands,' he enjoined them to mount their pulpits, and instruct their flocks in the foulness of the doctrines that had so suddenly become paramount. The emigrants, likewise, were hatching plots in the interior of the kingdom. The Count d'Artois and the Prince de Condé had established themselves at Turin, whence they kept up an active correspondence with Lyons and the whole south of France. On the other hand, in all the principal towns the populace was in commotion. Wherever soldiers were stationed, continual conflicts occurred between them and the people; and they often abandoned their officers to the popular fury. At Toulon, a violent insurrection broke out, which the municipality and the National Guard took little pains to repress. The commandant of the port, and several officers of marines, were seized by the mob, maltreated, and thrown into dungeons, from which they were not released until after a decree of the National Assembly ordering their liberation. At Marseilles, the people, aided by the National Guards, forced the troops to evacuate all the forts; and at Beziers, in a riot occasioned by the seizure of some smugglers, five cus-

tom-house officers were hanged in a row. At Montauban and other places, the Catholics rose against the Protestants; and the National Guards siding with both parties, desperate encounters took place, in which numerous lives were sacrificed. Thus all the elements of strife were in activity. Royalist emissaries were seeking to kindle a civil war; the clergy were labouring to arouse the fell spirit of fanaticism; the people were turbulent, and regardless of authority; the army was disorganised, and in mutiny against its officers: whilst the only power whose mandates bore any sway, was a popular assembly composed of several hundred members; themselves divided into factions, disputing fiercely with each other, and animated with all the passions raging around them. Such the condition of France at the close of her first year of liberty!

Paris had enjoyed an unusual interval of repose. On the morning of Christmas-day, its inhabitants were startled by the appearance of a placard, distributed through all the quarters of the city, to the following effect:—

‘The Marquis de Favras was last night arrested, with his wife, on account of a plan he had projected to raise 30,000 men, to cause M. de Lafayette and the mayor to be murdered, and then to cut off our provisions. MONSIEUR, the king’s brother, was at the head of it. (Signed) BARAUX.’

This announcement caused the greatest astonishment, especially the denunciation against the Count de Provence. The statement of the arrest of Favras was correct. He had, in truth, been engaged in maturing a plan to carry off the king, and his proceedings having attracted the attention of the Committee of Inquiry of the Commune, it had directed his apprehension. He was a hot-headed personage, who had led a very irregular life, and passed through many vicissitudes of fortune. In the course of his career he had married a German princess; but having fallen into the slough of poverty, he had sought, since the outbreak of the Revolution, to amend his fortunes by an ostentatious zeal in the cause of the king. Having been recommended to Monsieur as adroit in matters of finance, that prince had, in an evil hour, intrusted him with obligations to the extent of 2,000,000 francs to be converted into cash. This operation served to associate him with Favras, who, unknown to him, was canvassing among the principal members of the royalist party to raise funds in furtherance of the scheme he had conceived; which, according to the testimony of the witnesses who deposed against him, was one sufficiently wild and improbable; namely, to introduce 1200 horse into Paris during the night, seize and put to death the three most important officials—Lafayette, Bailly, and Necker—and securing the person of the king, to conduct him to Peronne or Montargis, where he was to be met by an army of 26,000 gentlemen.

To relieve himself from the imputation of this connection, so publicly proclaimed, Monsieur repaired on the very same day to the Hotel de Ville, and made a satisfactory explanation before the Commune. The sentiments of this prince were known to be liberal, and the frankness and urbanity of his deportment rendered him popular. His speech, which contained an emphatic approval of the Revolution, was heard with great applause; and on his return to the Tuileries he was escorted by a vast crowd, who cheered him with lusty shouts. As to Favras, he was remitted to the court of the Chatelet, and forthwith arraigned at its bar on a charge of treason against the nation.

This affair of Favras seemed to revive the spirit of sedition, which had been for a time dormant among the Parisians. The evasion of the king was always a subject of apprehension to them, and they were ever ready to believe any rumour, however absurd, which had reference to it. The faubourgs began to be agitated; crowds collected round the Chatelet, vociferating death to Favras; and several companies of the old French Guards, now enrolled in the national militia, proceeded to the Champs Elysées, and unfurled the standard of revolt. These Guards, since their first defection from the king, had shown themselves infected with the Revolutionary mania in its greatest height, and thrown off all the restraints of discipline. On them Lafayette could place no reliance, and he was perhaps not sorry to have an opportunity of disbanding them. Collecting a sufficient force of the National Guard, he followed them to the Champs Elysées, where they had been already joined by hordes of brigands, ripe for mischief, surrounded and disarmed them. Two hundred of their number he stripped of their uniform, and consigned to the prison of Saint Denis. His prompt suppression of this insurrectionary attempt failed, nevertheless, to restore tranquillity to the metropolis. The court of the Chatelet had ventured to balk the bloodthirsty appetite of the populace, by acquitting the Baron de Besenval of the crime wherewith he was charged. This crime was that of designing to subjugate Paris by military force on the 14th July, the day of the capture of the Bastille, at which period he was second in command under Marshal Broglie. His acquittal was unfortunate for poor Favras. Robbed of one expected victim, the 'good people' would not tolerate the loss of another. The judges were openly intimidated; and although Lafayette assured them of his protection, they durst not again brave the odium of sparing an aristocrat. Favras was found guilty, and condemned to be hanged on the Place de Grève. The joy of the multitude at this sentence was supreme. The prospect of seeing a marquis hanged diffused infinite satisfaction, because it exemplified so strikingly the new law of equality. Accordingly, on the day of execution, the whole area of the Place de Grève, the windows and roofs of the surrounding houses, the steps and bal-

conies of the Hotel de Ville, were filled with spectators, who abandoned themselves to revolting mirth. It was late in the afternoon before Favras was brought to the scaffold. The gloom of darkness had fallen; and to enable the crowd to enjoy in perfection the coveted sight, the gibbet was illuminated. Favras confronted the savage horde with calmness. He protested his innocence; but he was answered with coarse gibes and shouts of exultation. He submitted himself to the hands of the executioner; and the ghastly spectacle of his body dangling amid the flickering lights, was the signal for a roar of acclamations, echoed to the remotest alley of the faubourgs.

The king was not implicated in this project of Favras, although it is probable the queen was not altogether ignorant of it.* But suspicion was not the less directed against him; and to calm the ferment that prevailed, he resolved to take a very decided step. This was, so far as words and declarations could go, to identify himself with the Revolution in the most solemn and emphatic manner. Accordingly, on the 4th of February, he appeared in the Assembly, attended only by his ministers, and delivered a speech which excited the most lively emotions of gladness. He commenced by recapitulating the efforts he had made to allay the troubles that had disturbed France, to avert the horrors of famine, and to relieve the financial pressure—efforts which had enabled the Assembly to prosecute its beneficial labours. He then said, ‘I think the time is come when it is of importance that I should associate myself, in a more express and manifest manner, in the execution and success of all that you have planned for the benefit of France. I cannot seize a more suitable occasion than when you submit for my acceptance decrees designed to establish a new organisation in the kingdom, which must have so important and propitious an influence on the happiness of my subjects and the prosperity of this empire.’ He promised to uphold and defend this new organisation, and he exhorted all who had suffered losses to be resigned, to take example by him, who did not repine at the sacrifices he had made, for he found a sufficient compensation in the increase of the national welfare. He urged the importance of union among all classes of his subjects, and besought such as were afflicted with painful recollections to dismiss them, and join with him in the bonds of peace

* Madame Campan says, ‘Whilst M. de Favras was on his trial, the queen did not conceal from me her fears as to the avowals of the unfortunate nobleman in his last moments.’—Vol. ii. p. 93. The widow and son of the marquis likewise were presented to the queen, as she dined in public on the Sunday following his execution, by some of those indiscreet courtiers who were continually compromising the king and her in popular estimation. She was herself so sensible of the extreme imprudence of this step, that she wept with anguish at the reflection of the folly of those around them. Madame Campan has preserved the details.—Pp. 99-101.

and concord. 'I will repay them,' he said tenderly, 'with my gratitude and affection.' One passage of his speech above all deserves to be recorded, proceeding from the mouth of a monarch who had been taught to regard unlimited power as a sacred birthright, and who had tasted the sweets of its exercise. 'I will defend, then, and maintain, constitutional liberty,' said Louis XVI.; 'the principles of which have been consecrated by the general wish in union with mine. I will do more; and in concert with the queen, who shares all my sentiments, I will early train the heart and mind of my son to the new order of things which circumstances have introduced. I will habituate him from his earliest years to place his happiness upon that of the French; and to learn, in spite of the language of flattery, that a wise constitution will preserve him from the dangers of inexperience, and that a just liberty adds a fresh value to the sentiments of love and loyalty of which the nation has for so many ages given such affecting proofs to their kings.'

The Assembly, and the numerous spectators who occupied the galleries, listened with rapture to this discourse. Upon its conclusion, they gave vent to their enthusiasm in prolonged exclamations of *Vive le roi!* The president addressed a brief reply to the king, in which he expressed the gratitude and affection he had inspired in the breasts of the representatives of the people. A deputation was appointed to accompany him on his return to the palace, and he was followed by an immense assemblage of the people, who rent the air with cries of gratulation. The queen advanced into the vestibule to meet the king, with the dauphin in her hand, and attended by the other members of the royal family. Addressing the deputation of the Assembly, she said, 'My sentiments are the same as those of the king; and I concur with heart and mind in the step which his love for his people has now led him to take. Here is my son; I will talk to him constantly of the virtues of the best of fathers. I will teach him early to cherish public liberty, and I trust he will be the firmest supporter of it.' Upon learning this declaration of the queen, the Assembly voted an address of thanks to her as well as to the king. A *Fête Nationale* was ordered to celebrate this happy day, in which Louis XVI. had placed himself at the head of the Revolution; and in the evening the whole of Paris was illuminated.

Whilst under the influence of the emotion caused by this unexpected adhesion on the part of the king, the Assembly decreed that, as he had undertaken to uphold the constitution, all its members should contract a similar obligation, and take the civic oath, on pain of forfeiting their functions as deputies. The president was the first to ascend the tribune and repeat the oath of fidelity 'to the nation, the law, and the king,' and to maintain the constitution, in which he was followed by all the members pre-

sent in rotation. The spectators in the galleries then rose, and with uplifted arms demanded to participate in the patriotic adjuration. The Assembly consented with acclamation; and in stentorian echoes the formula was again resounded. The Commune was advertised of this scene, and it hastened to enact one of a like character in the Hotel de Ville. Every commune in the kingdom imitated the example; and the taking of this oath, at all times, and on all occasions—in churches, clubs, public halls, and coffee-rooms—became the ruling mania of the phasis. It was henceforth made the condition of holding any office, civil or military, and the test by which all suspected of royalism were tried. Many royalists, nevertheless, submitted to the ordeal, especially officers of the army, who were unwilling to abandon their hopes of arresting the Revolution, and who excused their compliance by citing the exhortation of the king. Bouillé himself swallowed the nauseous dose after a severe mental struggle.*

Louis XVI., in this action of his martyrdom, bent to a storm he felt for the moment resistless. It cost him, doubtless, a bitter pang, for it had something of the abjectness of a prostration. Benevolent as was his heart, upright as were his intentions, he had a lively sense of his own dignity, and must have inwardly repined at the ungracious compulsion.† But to court popularity, to dispel suspicion of the designs he harboured, seemed his only resource. Yet such was his bitter fate, that the effect of every demonstration he could make with this view was marred by his own friends. They were the first and loudest to proclaim that he was not free; that he was under coercion; and that his real sentiments were not to be judged by his public declarations. This latter impression was perhaps universal. The majority of the Assembly might applaud him exultingly when he pronounced a flattering approval of all they had done, but they viewed it as an involuntary surrender to circumstances, and at bottom gave him but little credit for sincerity. They were willing and happy to have the benefit of his open cohesion, were it ostensible only; but

* The speech of the king on the 4th February was extremely unpalatable to the royalists in general, and to none more so than to Bouillé. He exclaims with reference to it, 'What was my astonishment! I had remained in France, and endured so many pains and solitudes only to preserve for the king the nucleus of an army, which might one day assist him in resuming at least the attitude of a monarch, enable him to speak and act as a sovereign, and he delivered himself without reserve to fools and miscreants who were plotting his ruin; for how was he to resile from such a step without dishonouring his character, one of the greatest misfortunes that can befall a monarch? I resolved, therefore, to quit France, and go in quest of another country.'—*Memoires*, p. 104. This hasty resolution to emigrate, Bouillé relinquished at the express instance of the king.

† Weber, who was the foster-brother of Marie-Antoinette, says, 'I may remark that, before the Revolution, no person ever presumed to practise familiarity with Louis XVI., or to fail in the respect due to a monarch. He would not have suffered it; and all who have approached him, are aware how strongly the sentiment of his dignity was impressed on his mind.'—*Memoires*, vol. i. p. 70.

remained not the less assured that, if by any means he escaped from his present predicament, and gained again the upper hand, he would undo their work, and even, in his own despite, be driven to effect a counter-revolution. Thus, after the first emotions of surprise and delight had subsided, an indifference to the act succeeded, which was manifested the very next day when Malouet rose to move that the king's speech be taken into consideration, 'in order that the sitting of yesterday might not be left without any other trace than that of barren applause.' He was stopped by cries of *Order! The Constitution!*—and the Assembly coldly proceeded to the order of the day.

The minority of the Assembly, the *Coté-Droit*, on its part, gave no heed to the precepts of the king enjoining amity and concession, and certainly did its best to nullify the object he had contemplated. The opposition it maintained became, as it were, only the more angry and contentious, tending to irritate the passions he would fain have soothed and lulled. The spoliation of the clergy was the exasperating incentive. This could never be pardoned; and every effort was tried to impede and prevent it being executed. In the hope of retaining their property, to which they clung with a desperate tenacity, the clergy even offered to raise a loan of 400,000,000 livres themselves, a proposition which was at once rejected. The Assembly, nevertheless, made a very liberal provision for the ministers of religion. According to a scale graduating with the population of dioceses, the archbishops and bishops were to have incomes of 50,000, 25,000, 15,000, and 10,000 livres. The parish priests, in the same manner, with reference to the extent of their charge, were to enjoy stipends of 2000, 1500, and 1200 livres, and curates 700 livres, with manses and gardens. Friars and nuns also were to be pensioned, hospitals and seminaries to be supported, ecclesiastical edifices to be built and repaired; so that, upon the whole, the item for religion in the budget of the State was estimated at the large sum of 133,684,800 livres. When these dispositions were under discussion, the demeanour of the *Coté-Droit* was expressive of mingled vexation, scorn, and wrath. It would have preferred, apparently, that the Assembly had made no provision for a religious establishment, or at all events, one that might have been more justly branded as meagre and insufficient. To interpose an obstacle, and place the majority on the horns of a dilemma, a motion was renewed which had been once before introduced by the Bishop of Nanci, to the effect that the Catholic Apostolic and Roman religion was the religion of the nation, and its form of worship the only one authorised. This was an insidious proposition, because the Assembly, by rejecting it, accredited in some degree the injurious stigma of impiety, and by adopting it, maimed the principle of religious freedom. Charles de Lameth sought to induce its withdrawal,

or, failing in that, to parry the thrust by recalling with bitter irony the sublime language of Inspiration. He said, 'The motion now proposed to you can only serve to create doubts touching the religious opinions of the Assembly. Have we not manifested them sufficiently by taking morality and religion as the basis of all our decrees? Have we not founded the constitution upon brotherly love and good-will towards men, the consoling equality so much recommended by the Gospel? The Assembly has, to use the words of Scripture, "put down the mighty from their seat, and exalted the humble and meek;" it has taken under its protection the weak, and the people whose rights were denied; it has, in short, realised, for the benefit of man, those words of Jesus Christ himself, "The first shall be last, and the last first."' Vehe- ment applause from the Coté-Gauche and the galleries testified to the pungency of this reproof, and the Coté-Droit was for a moment abashed; but recovering courage, it still pressed the motion, and a scene of great excitement ensued. Fifty members at once rushed to the tribune, and struggled for precedence on its steps. The occupants of the galleries, as was usual on such occasions, took part in the turmoil, and vociferated with all the strength of their lungs. The president rang his bell with energy, but its tintinations were lost in the din of voices. The confusion was too great to allow the continuance of the debate, and the sitting was broken up in tumult and uproar. The discussion was ad- journed to the next day. The ferment spread from the hall of the Assembly to the far quarters of the suburbs, and by night, vast crowds had congregated in the gardens of the Palais-Royal and the Tuileries. The question at issue was one scarcely cal- culated to interest the populace, but some sinister design against the Revolution, and in favour of the clergy, especial objects of popular hatred, was thought to lurk beneath it. Accordingly, on the following morning, the doors of the Assembly were besieged by a clamorous multitude, through which the members could with difficulty penetrate. Many of the clergy were maltreated, and almost all were assailed with groans and maledictions. In the hall itself the galleries were filled by a turbulent audience, which raised such yells when a member of the Coté-Droit appeared in the tribune, that no advocate of the motion could obtain a hear- ing; and after a boisterous scene, disgraceful to a deliberative assembly, it was resolved that, considering the evidences of re- spect given by the National Assembly for the Catholic religion, its sentiments could not be doubtful, and that it ought not to entertain the proposed motion. Thus the subject was disposed of, and the only result of its being mooted was to aggravate the unpopularity of the clergy and the whole Coté-Droit.

Nothing daunted by their defeat, however, or by apprehensions of violence, which they might well deem far from illusory, the

leaders of the Côté-Droit made another more serious attempt to arrest the operations of the Assembly. This was no other than to effect its dissolution. It was now the month of April, and the year had nearly expired which was the term of delegation assigned in most of the commissions of deputies. A difficult point arose out of this circumstance—by what right could such deputies sit in a national assembly, and claim to legislate for France? Their original powers were clearly at an end, unless something had occurred to prolong them. They had joined in the oath of the tennis-court not to separate until the completion of a constitution; but they had taken a preceding oath to be faithful to the mandates of their constituents. Besides, delegates could not, of their mere motion, annul limitations in powers under which alone they possessed any rights. The Abbé Maury pressed these points with irresistible force, and turned against the Côté-Gauche one of its own most favourite maxims—the sovereignty of the nation. If this sovereignty were real, and not an empty sound, the nation could not by any sophism be deprived of its right to appoint fresh representatives when the functions of the existing ones had legally ceased. He contended also that the digestion of a constitution was no part of their mission, since the word was not mentioned in the instructions, and that the assumption of the work was a pure usurpation. Nay, the very title of ‘National Assembly’ was an unwarrantable arrogation, much more its audacious pretensions. Further reprehension to the like purport he bestowed, regardless of the indignant interruptions of the Côté-Gauche and the galleries.* His logic was found too cogent to be successfully combated, and Mirabeau came to the rescue with one of his magnificent outbursts. ‘We are asked,’ he said, ‘when the deputies of the people became a national assembly? I reply, on the day when, finding the entrance to their seats barred by soldiers, they repaired to the first place in which they could meet, and swore to perish sooner than betray or abandon the rights of the nation. Our powers, whatever they were, changed their nature on that day. Whatever the powers we have exercised, our efforts and our labours have legitimated, and the adhesion of the nation has sanctified them. You all remember the exclamation of that great man of antiquity, who had neglected legal forms in saving his country. Called upon by a factious tribune to say whether he had observed the laws,

* The zeal and intrepidity of Maury were respected by his opponents, and even by the populace. He was never personally an object of hatred, however distasteful the opinions he advocated. His presence of mind was very remarkable. On one occasion, when a Parisian mob pursued him with the fatal cry of *To the lantern!* he coolly turned round and said, ‘And when you have put me in the place of the lamp, do you suppose you will see any better?’ A general laugh followed this remark, and Maury was left unmolested. His exertions in the cause of royalty and the church were rewarded by the Pope with a cardinal’s hat.

he answered, "I swear I have saved the country!" Gentlemen (turning to the members of the *Coté-Gauche*), I SWEAR YOU HAVE SAVED FRANCE!' All further discussion instantly dropped. With a shout of acclaim, it was resolved that the limitations of powers should be held of no effect, and the commissions of the deputies remain valid until the constitution was consummated.

Having thus endowed itself with continued vitality, the Assembly pursued its course of regulating the royal prerogative. The right of making peace and war was one of its most important attributes. The king had hitherto exercised it at his sole will and pleasure, consulting often his personal passions rather than the public good. This dangerous faculty it was deemed incumbent to fetter. It chanced that at this time England and Spain, two of the chief maritime powers of Europe, came into collision in a remote corner of the North Pacific, on the bleak and savage coast of Oregon. For the privilege of navigating Nootka Sound, those two great states were preparing to engage in a deadly war, in which, it seems, the honour of France behoved her to take part. At least so thought Louis XVI. and his ministers, who immediately ordered the equipment of fourteen sail of the line. This fact was communicated to the National Assembly by a letter to the president from M. de Montmorin, minister for foreign affairs. It led to an immediate discussion of the question, whether the king should be intrusted with the capacity of declaring war without the express sanction of the legislative body. So keen was the interest excited by the subject, that it was debated during seven successive days. The occasion was remarkable for an open rupture between Mirabeau and the ultra-patriots of the *Coté-Gauche*. These latter contended that the nation alone could possess the right of embroiling itself in war, or of binding itself by treaties, and that the executive power was merely the agent of its sovereign will. Consequently, they inferred that the king could not wield the sword, or pledge the word of the State, but by permission of the Assembly, as the representative embodiment of the nation.* The members of the *Coté-Droit*, on the other hand, upheld the exclusive privilege of the king to embark in hostilities, or contract alliances, as the sole judge of their necessity and expediency. Mirabeau stepped in between these extreme

* The burden of the speeches made by these parties consisted of invectives against the abuses which had marked the conduct of kings in exercising the prerogative of making war. The Duke d'Aiguillon, in particular, quoted a celebrated instance. Louis XIV. was one day surveying the château of Trianon, when he descried a window inclining out of the perpendicular. Hereupon he fell into a violent rage, and stormed and railed immoderately. Louvois, his minister, said to those around him, 'The king attends too much to trifles; we must find him more serious employment. We must engage him in a war.' 'And war was kindled!' exclaimed the Duke d'Aiguillon; 'the blood of Frenchmen flowed! And for what? Because a window of Trianon was awry!'—*Bertrand's Annals*, vol. ii. p. 394.

combatants. He showed the impolicy of such a question as that of declaring war against a particular state being made the topic of preliminary discussion in a popular assembly, and affirmed that the king, as the personification of France to foreign powers, and her link of communication, was naturally the most proper and competent to take the initiative in differences or negotiations with them, inasmuch as promptitude and decision were always requisite in such contingencies. He allowed, nevertheless, that in the nation rested the power of controlling the action of the executive, so that its representatives might approve or condemn the commencement of a war, or the formation of a treaty, whereby neither the first could be carried on, nor the latter ratified, without their consent. This was clearly the most sensible solution of the problem, being in accordance with both good policy and the spirit of a constitutional monarchy. But the populace viewed it in a very different light. It was at once concluded that this moderation on the part of Mirabeau resulted from a venal compact with the court; and whilst Barnave, who had immediately followed him in the debate, and spoken with great bitterness, was borne in triumph through the streets, public criers hawked copies of a writing entitled *The Great Treason of the Count de Mirabeau*. The moment was critical for the continuance of his sway: stripped of popularity, and an object of suspicion to the people, his influence would have been greatly damaged, if not wholly destroyed. He armed himself, accordingly, for a mighty struggle; and the next day appeared in the tribune, as he himself said, to perish or to conquer. The hall of the Assembly was filled to overflowing, for expectation of a fierce encounter was vividly aroused. The victory of the redoubtable athlete was complete. 'I, too,' he said, 'have been borne in triumph, and yet they are crying to-day *the great treason of the Count de Mirabeau*. I had no need of this lesson to learn that the distance was short between the Capitol and the Tarpeian Rock; but such dastardly attacks will fail to check a man who contends in behalf of reason and his country.' He then proceeded to apostrophise Barnave with terrible effect; he exposed him as invading the principles of the constitution, in ascribing to the Assembly alone the right of expounding the national will, which it shared with the king. One by one he refuted all the arguments he had adduced, with such force of reasoning, such animated eloquence, that he speedily carried conviction with him, and in the end won all suffrages. Universal plaudits were showered upon him as he descended from the rostrum. The Assembly pronounced the discussion closed, and refused to hear Barnave in reply. Proceeding to a division, it adopted, by a large majority, the form of decree proposed by Mirabeau, which was in consonance with the doctrines he had enunciated. Thus did he vindicate, as well his own supremacy,

as the just and essential prerogatives of the crown. It was to him indeed a day of triumph, for whereas he had been threatened by envious rivals with annihilation, he emerged from the peril not only unscathed, but more potential than ever.

The Assembly was not yet content with the blows it had inflicted upon the clergy. Determined to remodel every institution, to regulate it upon the strictest principles, to harmonise it in spirit and form with the new order of things, the *Coté-Gauche* committed the egregious error of interfering with the organisation of the church. No measure exposed it to so much calumny, or proved so disastrous in its consequences. It supplied the clergy with a master-grievance more formidable in its effect on consciences than the confiscation of their property. The church of France, like most of the kindred establishments in Europe, was feudal in its origin and constitution. The bishops, instead of being simple overseers, as their name and office implied, were prelates who held their sees as fiefs under the usual conditions attached to such investitures, among which military service was the chief. The appointment of these ecclesiastical barons was sometimes in chapters, and sometimes directly in the king; but a foreign power claimed to preside over nominations, and to confirm or annul them as it saw fit. This was a potentate of Italy, known as the Pope, who was acknowledged to be the supreme head of the Roman Catholic faith. The great body of the priesthood, the actual ministers of religion, were presented to parochial charges in different ways, but all totally irrespective of the flocks they were to tend and teach. Cures of souls, under the name of benefices, were recognised as property vested in individuals, and transmissible to heirs. Thus the lords of manors shared with the crown and the bishops the appointment of incumbents to the parishes of France. The whole system was in direct hostility to the ruling dogma of the Revolution—that the people were the only legitimate source of every species of authority. And if the popular right might be contested with regard to kings, on the score of both precedent and expediency, it could be less reasonably denied with regard to spiritual pastors, inasmuch as in the pure and apostolic times of Christianity, the faithful invariably exercised the privilege of election. Moved by these considerations, Camus, a stern and intolerant Jansenist, who, strangely enough, had been standing counsel to the church in the parliament of Paris, prepared a scheme of ecclesiastical polity entirely subversive of the one existing. He easily prevailed upon the philosophic members of the *Coté-Gauche* to adopt it, because they viewed religion as they did anything else, and held that it, too, must be moulded into the fashion of the times. By this scheme the number of bishops was reduced to the number of departments, which were henceforth to be the circumscriptions of their dioceses. They, and all

other beneficiaries, were to be chosen by the people in the same manner as the judges and members of the departmental and district councils. In proof of the mere political spirit in which this project was engendered, it received the title of 'The Civil Constitution of the Clergy.' When passed into a decree, it was presented to the king for his acceptance. Louis XVI. was a religious man, and of scrupulous conscience. He recoiled at so violent an invasion of preconceived notions, and withheld his assent until he applied to the Pope for guidance. He addressed a letter to his holiness, in which he earnestly prayed him to authorise the new organisation, well knowing he himself would be at last constrained to affirm it; which indeed came to pass; for the Pope, having refused to approve the measure, despite his conscientious objections, Louis XVI. ultimately gave it a reluctant sanction.

Whilst thus destroying every vestige of the aristocratic element in the church, the Assembly took care to eradicate also its last remnant in society. In the sitting of the 19th June, on the motion of members of the nobility—De Lameth, De Lafayette, De Noailles, De St Fargeau, De Montmorenci—all honorary titles were abolished, territorial designations suppressed, the use of liveries and armorial bearings prohibited, and the personal appellations of rank, such as *monseigneur*, &c. abrogated. All factitious distinctions were annihilated, and eminence made henceforth dependent upon individual exertion. The nobility in general, as was natural, deeply resented the loss of prized family titles; and great efforts were made to induce the king to refuse his sanction. Even Necker joined in advising the rejection of the decree; and he remonstrated with the Assembly itself on its impropriety. The measure was undoubtedly harsh, impolitic, and unnecessary; for whereas mere nominal designations could do no harm, they were nevertheless fondly cherished, being agreeable to human vanity, and their compulsory abnegation converted many quiescent disapprovers into active enemies of the Revolution. Perhaps, after the flush of excitement had subsided—for this night of the 19th June was similar in character to that of the 4th August—if it had been sent back to the Assembly, the decree would have been amended, so as to leave the retention of titles optional; but the king, with the concurrence of all the ministers except Necker, somewhat precipitately accorded his assent, and stamped it with the indelible character of a law. This facility in sweeping away the last barrier between the throne and the nation, may be considered to denote the feeling of the court as akin to that of the emigrants, who chuckled at every levelling act of the Assembly, and were pleased in proportion to the havoc it made, assuring themselves of a speedy and inevitable reaction.

The capture of the Bastille by the Parisian multitude was justly deemed the turning-point of the Revolution. Until that event,

the royal power was still in the ascendant, or at least invested with a halo which had been but slightly dimmed. But with the Bastille fell the king's authority, and, as if by an electric shock, the ancient monarchy had crumbled. The 14th July, therefore, the day on which the deed was done, appeared appropriate to be marked as the first great epoch of the Revolution. Its anniversary was now approaching, and the Assembly determined that it should be commemorated by a striking national festival. The idea of a general federation of the whole kingdom to take the civic oath, on the altar of the country, was suggested and adopted. This federation, it was decreed, should be held in the Champ de Mars, near Paris, and be formed of delegates from all the National Guards of France, the navy, and the different regiments of the army. Lafayette, as general of the Parisian National Guard, was nominated to be chief of the federation, and to preside over the ceremonies of the day. The idea of such a solemn gathering from every town and district in France to swear a national covenant, had in it something grand and imposing, and was calculated to strike the imaginations of men. In the present excited temper of the French, it was hailed with universal enthusiasm. The Assembly was felicitated on its conception by numerous deputations, and among the rest, by one professing to be from all the nations of the earth. At its head appeared a German baron, hereafter known as Anacharsis Clootz, who assumed the title of 'Orator of the Human Race.' He was a fanatic in the cause of liberty, and in his hatred of religion. In the name of the four quarters of the world, he demanded to be admitted to the federation, which he declared not the festival of the French only, but of all mankind. The Assembly received his speech with great applause, and readily granted the prayer of his petition. In the ferment of the time, this scene, which has been since derided as so supremely ridiculous, passed as an imposing homage to the humanising virtue of the Revolution, and tended in no small degree to increase the general intoxication.

The preparations for this great festival were commenced with all diligence: 12,000 workmen were employed in excavating the vast area of the Champ de Mars, and in rearing around it a lofty amphitheatre of earth and turf. But apprehensions being entertained that the operations would not be completed in time, the district assemblies of Paris published an invitation to the citizens to assist in the work. Immediately myriads flocked to the field of labour—men, women, and children—who, in strange medley, spread over the ground, and began eagerly with spades, pickaxes, shovels, barrows, to dig, trench, wheel away the soil, and construct the steps of the amphitheatre. It was an extraordinary spectacle: all classes of the community were mingled in this patriotic toil; the wives of tradesmen worked side by side with

public prostitutes ; priests, monks, exquisites of the promenades, vied in exertions with the common labourers and the *sans-culottes* of the faubourgs. Revolutionary songs were chanted—the *Ca Ira*, the *Marseillaise*, and others ; wine was distributed among the multitude in perambulating carts, and tents were erected round the enclosure to supply other articles of refreshment. At nightfall, as the clock struck nine, all collected under the banners of their respective sections, and marched into Paris, preceded by bands of music, and singing in chorus the burdens of favourite airs, interspersed with execrations against aristocrats.

As the day approached, the federates began to arrive. On the 10th July, the deputation from Brittany entered Paris, and marching to the Tuileries, halted under the king's windows. Its leader was admitted to the royal presence, who, presenting to the king his sword, said, as he bent on one knee, 'Sire, I deliver into your hands the faithful sword of the brave Bretons ; it will be stained only with the blood of your enemies.' Louis XVI. raised him from the ground, and returned his sword. 'It cannot be in better hands,' he said, 'than in those of my beloved Bretons. I have never doubted their affection and fidelity. Assure them from me that I am the father, the brother, and the friend of all Frenchmen.' All who witnessed this scene were affected, and the cries of *Vive le roi !* extended from the palace to the deputation and the crowd collected in the square and garden outside. On the 11th, the king held a review of the National Guards, at which the queen and the royal family were present. On the 12th, the federates of Tours were presented to him, that they might tender him a ring which had belonged to Henry IV. He accepted the ring, and promised to wear it on the day of the federation. On the 13th, he held a grand levee, at which all the chiefs of deputations from the National Guards of the kingdom were ushered to the foot of the throne by Lafayette. During all these days Paris was in a continual bustle, but it was the bustle of gladness, for not a single disturbance occurred to break the general peace. The Commune had taken care to provide accommodation for the federates, who were for the most part, however, hospitably received by the inhabitants in their private houses. All was joy and exultation at this union of emancipated France into one undivided commonwealth.

At length the morning of the 14th dawned. It was saluted by the discharge of cannon and the ringing of bells. The federates assembled on the Place de la Bastille, whence they moved in procession to the garden of the Tuileries, where they were joined by the Assembly and the municipality. Here the order of march was arranged. The deputies of the forty-two first departments, according to alphabetical order, led the van ; after them came a battalion of cadets ; and next the National Assembly, which was

immediately followed by a battalion of veterans, being thus enclosed between the rising and the expiring generation. The members of the municipality, the delegates from the army, headed by two marshals of France, and those from the navy, with the Count d'Estaing at their head, walked behind, and in the rear were the deputies of the remaining forty-one departments. This immense body defiled along the streets of Paris amid the acclamations of the people, who had congregated in vast numbers. Bands of music played martial and patriotic tunes, streamers waved from all the windows, and though a pitiless rain poured, the federates stopped at intervals, and danced farandoles with gestures and shouts of joy. A bridge of boats had been thrown across the Seine, leading directly to the Champ de Mars. This was crossed; and after a march of three hours, the procession deployed into the plain. From six in the morning, the seats of the amphitheatre had been occupied by spectators of both sexes, who beguiled the time, and defied the weather, with the sprightliness and vivacity characteristic of the French. Three hundred thousand persons were thus ranged in circular tiers. On the opposite side of the river, the heights of Passy and Chaillot were covered with moving swarms, surveying the animated scene below. At the extremity of the plain, a little in advance of the line of circumference, the king sat on a platform, and at his side the president of the National Assembly, beneath an awning decorated with fleurs de lis and tricoloured flags. On an elevated balcony apart were stationed the queen and the royal family. The deputies of the Assembly, and members of the Commune and magistracy, took their places in a gallery stretching on both sides of the king. The federates formed in circular columns, on the ground embracing the altar of the country, reared in the centre, on a base of twenty-five feet in height, ornamented with allegorical figures. Three hundred priests were posted on the steps of the altar, clad in white surplices, and girded with tricoloured scarfs. Conspicuous, mounted on a milk-white charger, sat Lafayette in the midst, advanced between the altar and his forty thousand brethren in arms.

The solemnities of the day commenced by the celebration of a mass. Talleyrand, Bishop of Autun, officiated. As he chanted the words of the service, he was accompanied by the attendant priests, and their united voices echoed in the air, commingled with the distant roar of artillery. At the conclusion of the religious rite, Lafayette dismounted and ascended the steps of the altar. Placing his hand upon it, he pronounced in a loud voice, for himself and for all the federates, the following oath:—‘We swear to be for ever faithful to the nation, the law, and the king; to maintain, with all our power, the constitution decreed by the National Assembly, and accepted by the king; and to remain united with all the French in the indissoluble bonds of fraternity.’ Thousands of

swords gleamed in the sun, which at this moment burst through the watery clouds, upraised as the federates with simultaneous voice repeated—*We swear!* The president of the National Assembly next uttered the oath, and in like manner the deputies stretched forth their hands and cried again—*We swear!* The spectators caught up the sound, and throughout the whole assemblage was one universal shout of *We swear!* The king then rose, and with his right hand pointed to the altar, delivered the oath prescribed for him: ‘I, king of the French, swear to employ all the power delegated to me by the constitutional act of the State, in maintaining the constitution decreed by the National Assembly, and accepted by me.’ A salvo of artillery marked the obligation of the monarch, thus contracted in the face of the assembled nation. The multitude gave way to every expression of unmixed satisfaction. The queen added to the ecstasy of the feeling, by raising the dauphin in her arms, and showing him from the balcony. She and her son were hailed with vehement acclamations. Again silence was restored, and the Bishop of Autun resumed his place at the altar. Strains of sacred music hushed the ferment of gladness, and awakened in its stead a religious emotion. The bishop and his priests recited a thanksgiving to God, amid the pious stillness of the mighty congregation. At its close, the clamour of exultation was once more heard; shouts of *Vive le roi!* *Vive la nation!* rent the air; the signal guns were fired, which, repeated from height to height in the four quarters of the heavens, carried to the remotest corners of France the auspicious news that the national confederation was completed.

Rejoicings were continued for several days in Paris. The city was illuminated, and from the stream of the Seine magnificent fireworks were exhibited. Feasts were given to the federates, and the people abandoned themselves to the allurements of pleasure. Balls were held every night on the site of the Bastille, where, at the entrance of the enclosure, was an inscription—*Here is dancing.* The Champs Elysées were lighted up by festoons of lamps hung from the branches of the trees, and the gaieties and amusements of a fair attracted immense crowds. No accident occurred to mar the general felicity, nor was any symptom of disorder displayed. All, on the contrary, was amity and concord. The past seemed forgotten, and the distinctions of parties obliterated. Such blissful moments there were in this terrible shock of systems, when the minds of men were filled with sweet illusions, and drew auguries of a glorious and peaceful regeneration! Alas! they were fleeting. Passions, appeased for a moment, burst out with only the greater fury from the transitory calm. The federates returned to their departments, carrying with them delightful impressions of all they had witnessed: true loyalty towards the king, true love for their country, confidence in the

National Assembly, which had achieved the great work of overthrowing despotism, and the still greater of reconciling it to constitutional limitations. In their opinion, the Revolution was accomplished; the future appeared to their dazzled eyes radiant with happiness and security. On the surface, it is true, things wore a smiling aspect; but it was deceitful; the seeds of discord were never more profusely or ineradicably scattered.

CHAPTER IV.

ANARCHICAL STATE OF FRANCE—CIVIL CONSTITUTION OF THE CLERGY—FLIGHT OF LOUIS XVI. TO VARENNES—14TH JULY 1790 TO 26TH JUNE 1791.

The festival of the federation passed, and was forgotten. It suspended for a moment the struggle of parties, only to be resumed with more animosity than ever. The court itself was foremost in aggravating the rancour of divisions, and in provoking the wrath of enemies. The Duke of Orleans, sick of his exile in England, had seized the opportunity of the federation to return to Paris. Lafayette had endeavoured to deter him from so doing, still thinking his presence detrimental to the public tranquillity; but the prince persisted, declaring, with some truth, that his absence had by no means prevented disturbances. After his arrival, he sought to make his peace with the king; he both wrote to him and attended one of the levees at the palace; but his advances were neglected, and his person insulted.* The proceedings in the court of the Chatelet, which had been suffered to languish, were immediately revived, and a report incriminatory of the duke and Mirabeau presented to the Assembly. Thus was the court impelled, by its blind hatred of the Duke of Orleans, to commit two most egregious blunders: first, that of disquieting public opinion, and waging hostilities against popular leaders, with no hope of advantage beyond that of gratifying malevolence; second, that of alienating and incensing a man with whom a compact had been not long ago formed, and who was so potent for good or harm. It

* When he was in the queen's apartments, M. de Goguelas, who happened to be there also, went up to him, took him by the shoulder, and twirling him violently around, said in a very loud voice, 'Ah! you here, you scoundrel! How dare you appear in this place?'—*Bertrand's Annals*, vol. iii. p. 36. This M. de Goguelas stood very high in the favour of the queen, and after this public outrage upon the Duke of Orleans, continued to be employed by her in the most confidential missions. He was the chief medium of communication, likewise, between the king and the Marquis de Bouillé.

is true that, although Mirabeau, on the face of the report, appeared equally guilty with the duke, it was against the latter only the vengeance of the court was pointed; and the Abbé Maury took care to distinguish between them, acknowledging that the grounds for an impeachment were insufficient against Mirabeau. But this distinction was not attended to by other speakers of the Côté-Droit, one of whom, Bonnai, classed them together as *great criminals*. This roused all the ire of Mirabeau, who ascended the tribune, and after compelling Bonnai to retract the expression, denounced the whole proceedings as infamous, inveighed against the judges of the Chatelet and the witnesses who had given evidence, and warned the Côté-Droit that he could uplift a veil and reveal practices 'such as would be marked in history by the most just and implacable vengeance.' With regard to the principal charge alleged against himself—namely, that he had gone through the ranks of the regiment of Flanders to seduce the soldiers—he cited the testimony of a witness, who had deposed that the real individual was a M. de Gomaches, 'whose appearance very much resembled Mirabeau's.' 'Thus,' said he, 'all things being duly weighed and examined, the proceedings have, in reality, nothing unpleasant upon this head, save in so far as they attack M. de Gomaches, who finds himself judicially accused of being very ugly, from his resemblance to me.' All his sallies were effective: he moved the passions of his hearers at pleasure; he wrought them to indignation, enthusiasm, or mirth, as the mood suited him. In the end, after a turbulent debate of two days, the Assembly decided, without a division, amid the applause of the members and of the spectators in the galleries, that there were no grounds of accusation against the two representatives of the people, the Duke of Orleans and the Count de Mirabeau.

It was better that the affair should so end, for the sake of the king himself. It was his obvious policy to allow excitement to subside, and to cultivate a good feeling with the majority of the Assembly, as he had inculcated on the 4th of February. The impeachment of the Duke of Orleans and Mirabeau would have occasioned a ferment such as had not perhaps even yet been witnessed, and their condemnation, much less their punishment, was not to be dreamt of. To engage in a pursuit which must be surely unsuccessful, and might be critically perilous, was therefore the height of absurdity, and it was fortunate for the king that the wishes of his court were balked. A certain cordiality existed, or seemed to exist, between him and the Assembly at this time, which it would have been folly to disturb. Even the populace gave him no uneasiness. He enjoyed a degree of personal freedom greater perhaps than he had himself anticipated. He spent great part of the summer of 1790 at the country palace of Saint-Cloud, whither, at his own request, he was accompanied

by detachments of the National Guard. Upon the subject of his civil list, the Assembly had manifested a delicacy and generosity which touched him sensibly. It had requested him to fix the amount himself, and to specify the royal properties he wished to retain, the remainder being designed for the benefit of the State. With some reluctance he undertook to make this specification; and when he did so, the items were voted without discussion, and by acclamation. In addition to the revenues arising from demesnes, parks, and forests, the expenses of the royal household, civil and military, were fixed at 25,000,000 francs (£1,000,000 sterling). By his marriage articles, Louis had covenanted, that in the event of his prior death, the queen should possess a jointure of 4,000,000 livres. This engagement the Assembly also confirmed, and for its consideration in a matter so near his heart, he returned it especial thanks.

Still, Louis XVI. was unhappy, and had many causes to be so.* The loss of power was ill to brook; the indignity of his fetters was galling; but worse than all, were the horrors of the strife raging around him, and the hopelessness of amendment. The language of the public press forms an index of the thoughts and sentiments current among a community. The licentiousness of the Parisian journals was diabolical. Abuse of the king, the queen, of aristocrats, was the staple subject of commentary, and imaginary plots against the people and the Revolution were continually invented. Two of these papers excelled all the rest in the pure ruffianism of their doctrines. They were conducted by two individuals, one of whom was already known in the Revolution, and both were destined to play conspicuous parts in the future acts of the drama—Camille-Desmoulins and Marat. The first was a man of education, and, by nature, of a generous disposition, but inflamed with a passionate ardour for liberty, which had perverted both his imagination and his heart. As the profane idiot Clotz had proclaimed himself the personal enemy of Jesus Christ, so he took the title of ‘Attorney-general to the Lantern.’ The latter was a maniac, who fulminated the most extravagant suggestions, and avowed himself the apostle of slaughter. Camille, speaking of the federation, exulted over the fallen monarch, and compared him to Perseus of Macedon, led in triumph, with his hands bound, behind the chariot of his con-

* He depicts his feelings in a letter written to the Duchess de Polignac about this time. ‘I have just returned from the country; the air has done us all good; but, alas! how changed that residence appeared to us! How sad was the breakfast table! none of you there to enliven it. Yet I do not despair of our meeting again; but when, I know not. How many things we shall have to say! Your friend (the queen) preserves her health, notwithstanding all the afflictions which overwhelm her. Adieu, madame; speak of me to your husband, and to all who surround you. You may say with truth that I shall not be happy until I find myself again among my old friends.’—*Montjoie*, p. 262.

queror, Paulus Æmilius. Marat exhorted the people to take up arms, or they were lost; to bring the king from Saint-Cloud, and shut up the Austrian, as he termed the queen; to seize the ministers, the mayor, and the general; in fine, to sacrifice five or six hundred lives for the safety of themselves and the country. It was in vain that Malouet denounced these shameful and barbarous writings in the Assembly; no steps were taken either to punish or to warn their authors. In the Jacobin Club, also, which was nightly attended by overflowing audiences, harangues of the most exciting character were delivered. Not alone were exaggerated praises of liberty and the Revolution sounded, but the people were idolised as the purest and most civilised on the face of the earth—patterns to the rest of mankind sunk in slavery and ignorance; and those who stood in the way to oppose them, or control their omnipotence, were held up to detestation. Thus the populace were taught to regard themselves as infallible and immaculate; to view even atrocities in the light of virtues; to curse the king, and all placed in authority over them, as so many illegitimate checks. The slightest movement of the court, the smallest incident that could be tortured into a counter-revolutionary symptom, gave a handle to declaim, and to ground the most outrageous accusations.

Well might Louis and the queen feel uneasy; but to what quarter could they turn their eyes for relief? Within the kingdom, there was no hope but by commencing a civil war. This alternative was in itself deplorable; whilst, even if it proved successful, their situation would be scarcely ameliorated. Efforts had already been made by agents of the Count d'Artois, then resident at Turin, to organise a movement in the south of France, the chief seat of which was to be at Lyons. By the aid of the priests, who were to preach a crusade for defence of the altar and the throne, the population was to be roused and fanaticised, the emigrants were to re-enter from Piedmont with as many foreign troops as they could collect, and, joining forces, were to march on Paris, deliver the king from bondage, and restore the good old system.* This was precisely what the king foreboded with trepidation. The triumph of the emigrants would only consign him from one set of taskmasters to another equally imperious, and perhaps more incorrigible. He would be wholly at their discretion; and he knew enough of their temper to dread being the

* Fromont, who visited Turin to concert the measures of this plan, gives a singular account of the divisions, the folly, the fatuity, that prevailed at the emigrant court. The high nobility were jealous of the inferior, and seemed to fear that if the latter had too great a hand in effecting a counter-revolution, they might be troublesome and presumptuous. They also derided the idea of fighting under the banner of religion as something supremely ridiculous—they who had laughed with Voltaire all their lives! The picture is, in truth, a curious one.—*Receuil relatif à la Revolution*, p. 4, et seq.

instrument of an implacable reaction.* He was consequently averse to their scheme, did all in his power to discountenance it, and was not sorry when the watchful and indefatigable Jacobins got scent of it, and by the arrest of the principal conspirators, extinguished it in embryo. He rather looked to the influence, if not the interference, of foreign powers to extricate him from his dilemma. In this frame of mind, he commissioned the Baron de Breteuil† to visit the different courts of Europe, with the view of combining them in a coalition, which, by its remonstrances, and the display of an armed force, might overawe the revolutionists, and induce them to accept a compromise, which would still leave him the substance of power. He hoped this might be accomplished without an invasion, the idea of which was equally repulsive with that of a civil war, flattering himself that the men who had defied him in the zenith of his sway, would quail before the dictates of a congress of sovereigns. In this delusion he wrote to his brother monarchs, recommending them to confide in Breteuil as the only exponent of his real desires, the only depositary of his secret projects; and, to justify his apparent treachery to a constitution he had so lately and solemnly sworn to uphold, he affirmed that, in despite thereof, an intention was openly manifested to destroy the last shreds of the monarchy. He inferred rightly that his own was the cause of kings in general, and that all were interested in propping his throne, lest the revolutionary scourge might prove infectious, and devastate their own dominions. Thus he invoked an intervention in the domestic concerns of France, which was fated, when it came, to precipitate all the evils it was designed to avert.

The army presented no source of comfort to the desponding monarch. The Assembly had taken care to win it, as well as the navy, to the cause of the Revolution, by throwing all its grades open to merit, abolishing corporal punishments, except in cer-

* 'I often had occasion to conclude, from what the queen told me, that she was of opinion Louis XVI. would be put in leading-strings if order were re-established by the return of the emigrants, which would still more increase his misery. She often said to me, "If the emigrants succeed, they will long dictate the law; it will be impossible to refuse them anything. To owe the crown to them would be too great an obligation to contract."'—*Campan*, tome ii. p. 107.

† The powers of the Baron de Breteuil were contained in the following letter:—
November, 1790.

MONSIEUR LE BARON—Knowing your great zeal and fidelity, and desirous of giving you a proof of my confidence, I have selected you for the purpose of trusting to you the interests of my crown. Circumstances will not allow me to give you instructions on every particular point, or to keep up a regular correspondence with you; but I send you this to serve as full power and authority towards the different powers with whom you may have to treat for me. You know my intentions, and I leave to your prudence to make such use of them as you shall think necessary for my service. I approve whatever you may do to attain the object I have in view, *which is the re-establishment of my lawful authority, and the happiness of my people.* (Signed) *Louis.*

tain extreme cases, and instituting juries composed of officers and privates for the trial of offenders. The officers had lost almost all control over their men, and the bonds of discipline were wofully relaxed. The spirit of insubordination had increased since the federation; for the delegates of the different regiments had embraced all the democratic tenets of the Parisians, and returned to disseminate them among their comrades. They even maintained a correspondence with members of the Jacobin Club, who sent them from time to time instructions, and prompted mutinous outbreaks. It is not singular, therefore, that, during the autumn and winter of 1790, the army fell into an almost complete state of disorganisation. The soldiers were universally disposed to join with the people, abandoning themselves to all sorts of excesses, threatening to pillage the towns and ravage the country. The National Guards, in this emergency, sought to support the officers, and oppose the troops; those of the whole country under Bouillé's command offered to nominate him their general; an offer which he pettishly declined, much to the regret of the king, and to his own future chagrin. The limits of his command had been extended over Lorraine, Alsace, Franche-Comté, and Champagne, to the borders of Switzerland; and his army consisted of 90 battalions of infantry, and 104 squadrons of cavalry. Of the infantry, about 10,000 were in garrison at Metz and Nancy, and these broke out into open rebellion. At Metz, the soldiers attempted to seize the military chest and colours, or demanded a sum of money as the price of their forbearance. Bouillé, accompanied by a few officers, planted himself at the door of the guardhouse, and resisted them until the arrival of the municipality, with the mayor at its head, who, having addressed the mutineers, persuaded them to retire peaceably into their barracks. The next day they again mustered, and were appeased only by a distribution of half the sum they had demanded the day before. At Nancy the mutiny was more serious. The troops combined with the populace, imprisoned their officers, intimidated the civic magistrates, and took possession of the town—appropriating the military chest, and levying contributions on the inhabitants. They sent messengers to the other garrisons, for the purpose of bespeaking their co-operation or quiescence; and likewise a deputation to the National Assembly and the Jacobin Club of Paris. The Assembly was in the greatest alarm at this insurrection of the troops, and perceived the necessity of a prompt repression, to preserve the kingdom from immediate desolation. It accordingly passed a decree, enjoining the garrison and people of Nancy to return to duty and order, under pain of suffering the penalties of treason against the nation; and authorising the executive power to put it in execution by force, if necessary. The king appointed General Malseigne to carry

this decree to Nancy, and directed Bouillé to aid him in its enforcement. The mutineers derided the injunctions of the Assembly, and threw Malseigne into a dungeon.

Bouillé was placed in the most awkward situation. He could place no reliance on any of his infantry, except the foreign regiments; and of these he had none immediately at hand. He despatched orders for four Swiss and German battalions to meet him at Toul and Fronard on the road to Nancy; and left Metz secretly, fearing he might be stopped by its seditious garrison. But the soldiers were now repentant, and sent to beg that he would trust and employ them. The National Guards of Metz also volunteered to serve against the rebels of Nancy; and Bouillé, with some hesitation, consented to take 600 of each. His whole force, when mustered at Fronard, amounted only to 3000 infantry and 1200 cavalry; whereas the insurgents, having been joined by 2000 National Guards of the adjoining departments, counted 10,000 men under arms, with eighteen pieces of cannon. It required great intrepidity on the part of a general to advance against a town thus strongly defended; but Bouillé was not daunted, though filled with gloomy presages of the impossibility of success. He halted his little army a league and a-half from the city, and sent a summons to the garrison and people to surrender, in obedience to the decree of the Assembly. A deputation of rebels came to meet him, accompanied by four officials of the department and municipality, who were forced, by threats of murder, to take part in the mission. Bouillé would listen to no conditions but those of unqualified submission, and dismissed the deputation with orders for the regiments in garrison to leave the town, liberate the officers in custody, and deliver up their cannon. When within half a league of Nancy, he was met by another deputation, which solicited a delay of one hour; granted by Bouillé. At its expiration, he advanced within thirty paces of the principal gate, and pointed against it the eight pieces of artillery he had brought with him. At this moment a third deputation sallied forth, to announce that his orders were about to be complied with; and he, in fact, saw one of the insurgent regiments leaving the town by another gate. General Malseigne and the imprisoned officers likewise appeared, and Bouillé congratulated himself upon the happy and prompt issue of the affair. But the gate was still guarded by soldiers and people in arms, and also by cannon. As Bouillé stood talking to Malseigne and the civil authorities, his vanguard, composed of Swiss, approached the gate. The insurgents exhibited marks of fury, and reviled the Swiss with opprobrious epithets. These retorted, and soon the quarrel was inflamed. Some of the rebels, maddened with rage, rushed to fire an immense piece of ordnance, an eighty-four pounder, loaded to the muzzle with canister shot. An officer, Desilles by name,

seated himself on the touch-hole, to frustrate their purpose. Him they ruthlessly prostrate, and discharge the piece into the midst of the Swiss. Fifty or sixty bodies are stretched on the ground, horribly mutilated. Exasperated at this treacherous murder, the Swiss and National Guards of Metz fall with desperation on the rebels, capture the guns, and force their way into the town. Bouillé, grieved and amazed, flies to the head of his troops; the regiments leaving the city return, believing that in their absence the people have been given up to slaughter. A fearful conflict is waged in the narrow streets; from cellars, windows, roofs, murderous volleys are poured upon the assailing troops. These still press on, contending bravely against superior odds; but the carnage is dreadful, and they begin to pause; a German battalion and the volunteers of Metz turn and fly. Bouillé sends in a troop of horse, which cuts its way, with the loss of half its number, to the great square in the centre of the city. The insurgent regiments are again summoned to submit and yield. Humbled and dispirited, they offer to lay down their arms; Bouillé spares them this humiliation, and orders them to depart, and encamp separately at prescribed distances. By nine in the evening, the town is evacuated and tranquillity restored; but the streets flow with blood; Bouillé counts forty officers killed, and hundreds of soldiers lie dead or mortally wounded. One of the insurgent regiments has left three-fourths of its body on the field of battle, which is also heaped with the corpses of the slain populace.

The firmness and vigour of Bouillé triumphed on this dismal day, but it was after a critical struggle.* Had he been repulsed, it would undoubtedly have been the signal for a universal insurrection of the soldiers and populace. Of this the king and the Assembly were duly sensible, and the gratitude of each was expressed in the warmest terms to him and all who had fought under his command. Lafayette, too, was profuse in his commendations, for he saw in this victory of Bouillé the confirmed stability of the constitution. But the Jacobins and the people of the faubourgs viewed the affair in a different light, and defended the cause of the insurgents, whom they mourned as pure patriots, sacrificed by a bloodthirsty royalist. Cries were raised for the impeachment of the ministers, as responsible for the instructions given to Bouillé, and riotous assemblages congregated at the Palais-Royal and in the garden of the Tuileries, under the very windows of the National Assembly. Exclamations resounded of *Death to Bouillé! Down with the ministers!* And such was the uproar, that the proceedings of the Assembly were interrupted. Already the mob began to press upon the guards on duty around

* He himself uses the following strong expression:—'Fortune on this occasion snatched me, as it were, by the hair of the head from the danger in which she had plunged me. It was the last favour I obtained from her.'—P. 159.

the building of the Feuillans, in which the Assembly now sat, and fears were entertained of a forcible irruption into the sanctuary of the legislature. Additional detachments of guards were hastily summoned; and after some hours of tumultuous storming, during which several persons were denounced as traitors to the country, by orators who openly exhorted the people to assassination, order was for a time restored, and the gathering dispersed. But at night similar scenes were repeated: the hall of the Jacobins rang with furious outcries, and the Palais-Royal was filled with an angry multitude clamouring for vengeance. The fermentation, however, passed away, without producing any actual outbreak; but the memory of the deed was treasured, to be revived at a moment more propitious for eking out revenge.

It may appear strange that the suppression of the revolt was distasteful also to the royalists. But upon a consideration of their position and sentiments, the surprise will cease. The firm establishment of the constitution was in their eyes the most fatal of evils, since it precluded all hope of the restoration of the old monarchy. They would have witnessed the overthrow of the Assembly, therefore, with satisfaction, and hailed the day on which its acts were annulled. This consummation must have been realised had the insurrection of the army extended, for the country would have been abandoned to a lawless soldiery, with the middle classes alone to contend for the preservation of social order. The nobles, the priests, the emigrants, would seize the opportunity to commence their attacks; and amid the universal hubbub, if the perfect reinstatement of the king were not ultimately effected, at least the hateful rule of the tiers-etat would be subverted, and a new scramble for power improvised. Such reflections crossed the mind of Bouillé himself when he contemplated his work. He almost regretted his success; for he judged that, if civil war had then broken out, the constitutionalists must needs have depended greatly on the forces the king could command, which, by increasing his importance, would have raised him from his fallen condition. 'The king thought, however,' he says, 'that I had rendered him a great service; whereas, in spite of myself, I had caused him to lose one of the only occasions which had offered since the Revolution for him to regain his throne.'*

When the Assembly recovered from the shock of this danger, it found itself entangled with the ever-recurring financial difficulties. The first issue of assignats, to the amount of 400,000,000, had been quickly absorbed, and passed successfully into circulation. The resource was tempting; for instead of racking ingenuity to devise means of meeting urgent engagements, the mere fabrication of paper seemed all that was requisite. So thought the

* *Memoirs*, p. 162.

finance committee of the Assembly, which in a report proposed to sweep away all existing embarrassments, and pay off the creditors of the State, save the annuitants, by one decisive emission of 2,000,000,000 assignats. Necker was thunderstruck at such a scheme, and remonstrated vehemently against it. Well aware how delicate a thing is credit, he pointed out the necessity of husbanding it with caution. An excess of paper currency, he argued, was always ruinous, even if based on substantial and exchangeable values, but incalculably more so when dependent only on an intangible hypothecation. The soundness of his views was incontestable; but two material circumstances weighed to render his counsels unavailing: first, the pressure of necessity; secondly, his own loss of influence. Never had a man tumbled, in the brief space of a year, from so great a height into such complete disregard. No heed was given to his elaborate arguments or his plaintive warnings; the proposition of the finance committee was indeed modified, but at the instance of the deputy Camus. It was decreed, after much debating, that only 800,000,000 of additional assignats should be issued, making, with the previous fabrication, 1,200,000,000—a quantity that was never, under any pretence, to be exceeded. This new emission was not to bear interest; and as sales were effected of national domains, the purchase moneys were to be applied in diminution of the circulation. Necker now saw that he had no longer a place in the Revolution, and that it was full time for him to withdraw from a scene on which he had become a cumbrous nullity. The rage of the populace against the ministers likewise tended, by suggesting alarms for his safety, to hasten his determination. On the 3d September, the very day after the tumult around the Feuillans, he sent a letter to the president of the Assembly, intimating his retirement from office, and alleging ill health as the cause. His letter was received with coldness and indifference, the president being simply directed to convey a frigid compliment in reply. He left Paris on the same day, and proceeded towards Switzerland. He had traversed the same route some months before in triumph, hailed as a saviour of the country; now, he was arrested as a criminal flying from justice. The municipality of Arcis stopped and detained him, until, by a submissive application to the Assembly, he had obtained a decree ordering his liberation. His carriage was beset at Vesoul also, but the magistrates interfered to allow his peaceful progress. He reached his native city of Geneva, and took up his abode in the neighbourhood, at Coppet, where, in philosophic seclusion, he could at leisure survey a revolution he had assisted to engender, but was unable to control. Necker, no doubt, was an able man, and, in a well-regulated monarchy, would have made an admirable finance minister; but he was quite unsuited to a troubled era of organic changes. To govern men, or stamp his

own character on an age, was not his province ; in truth, he often incurred ridicule by the inflated language of his reports to the Assembly, and he almost as frequently provoked derision as applause. Reason was with him the solitary weapon of controversy, and he fondly deemed its voice must be ever potential ; not reflecting that, in political or social conflicts, passions are too hot for so cold a monitor. With this he mingled illusions of human perfectibility—amiable and pleasing, doubtless, but visionary and fantastic.* He paid the penalty of error and ambition. In private business he had amassed a princely fortune, which, at the time of his retreat, he was fain to abandon. Being principally invested in the French funds, he dared not attempt to realise it : he left two millions and a-half behind him, according to his own expression, as a security for his administration.

The other ministers were not long in following his example. It was impossible they could resist the movement against them. They were accused on all sides : by the *Coté-Droit*, for suffering the authority of the king to be contemned and invaded ; by the *Coté-Gauche*, for not executing the decrees of the Assembly with vigour and alacrity. The mutiny of the seamen on board the Brest fleet was seized on as an occasion to denounce their weakness and incapacity. This mutiny was the result of the same causes as those that led to the revolt of the soldiers, and it might be more fairly attributed to the acts of the Assembly itself than to the ministers. Nevertheless, that and all the other disorders in the kingdom were charged upon them ; and in a joint report from four committees—the diplomatic, colonial, military, and naval—appointed to examine their conduct, it was proposed that an address should be presented to the king, representing their inefficiency, and praying their removal. This proposition occasioned a very animated debate. The *Coté-Droit* opposed it, on account of its involving an infringement of the royal prerogative, not from any wish to uphold the ministers. Indeed Cazales was unmeasured in his abuse. Against Necker, especially, he indulged in a furious tirade. Drawing a parallel between him and Strafford, the unfortunate minister of Charles I.—‘Ay, Strafford,’ said he,

* ‘A conversation which I had with Necker in the month of January 1789, and which was the last, never having seen him since, confirmed my opinion of his projects, and of the results he expected from them. I represented to him, with force and truth, the danger of the composition he proposed to give to the States-General : I told him he was arming the people against the first orders of the State, and delivering them unarmed into its hands, and that they would soon feel the effects of its vengeance, instigated by the two passions most active in the human heart—interest and self-love ; and much more to the same purpose. He answered me composedly, turning up his eyes to heaven, that reliance was to be placed on the moral virtues of mankind. I replied that was sheer romance, and he would see a horrible tragedy instead : I exhorted him to avert the bloody catastrophe. Necker simpered, and Madame Necker said that I was exaggerated in my ideas ; and if she did not call me a fool, she evidently thought me one.’—*Bouillé, Mem.*, pp. 69, 70.

‘had the courage to brave death, and is applauded by posterity; but is not this man also dead—this minister who has basely abandoned France to calamities created by himself? Is not his name effaced from the list of the living? Does he not endure the torment of outliving himself—of being conscious that he has left to history only a record of ignominy? As to the servile companions of his labours and of his shame, the present objects of your deliberation, we may apply to them the verse of the Italian poet—*They still walked, but they were dead.*’ Many of the Côté-Gauche likewise spoke against the recommendation of the committees; and it was finally rejected by a vote of 403 to 340. But this was so far from being a vote of confidence in the majority of the ministers, that, by a previous resolution, M. de Montmorin, foreign secretary, was expressly separated from his colleagues, and declared to merit the approbation of the country. On the contrary, it was regarded as tantamount to a vote of censure, and the obnoxious ministers did not hesitate to give in their resignations. To the king, their withdrawal from his councils was most painful. He knew them to be attached to his person and cause, and felt all the mortification of being obliged to part with friends, and take in their places suspected enemies. Lafayette’s advice was heard in the constitution of the new ministry. The office of keeper of the seals, one of the highest dignity, and always hitherto held by a person of the first rank, was conferred on Duport du Tertre, an obscure advocate, who had been formerly a subordinate in the police department of Paris. Latour du Pin was succeeded in the war department by Duportail, and Delessart took upon himself the combined functions of home secretary and finance minister. The duties of the ministers, in fact, had dwindled to those of mere clerks. They sat at the council board, it is true, and shielded the king from personal responsibility; but every branch of the government was under the rigorous supervision of the Assembly, by means of its various committees, which, in reality, engrossed the chief powers of administration.

In a yet more delicate point the feelings and scruples of the king were cruelly outraged. The enactment of the civil constitution of the clergy he had confirmed after a futile effort of resistance; but it had been condemned by the Pope, and was openly repudiated by the greater part of the bishops and clergy. This contumacy the Assembly was not disposed to tolerate, and it accordingly resolved that every ecclesiastical functionary should be compelled to take an oath to the civil constitution, on pain of forfeiting his charge, whatever it might be. This resolution was converted into a decree on the 27th November, and transmitted to the king for his sanction. Louis sought to escape from the dilemma by again referring to the Pope, but with no better success. His holiness was inexorable in his anathema against any

attempt of laymen to organise or remodel a church, much more to impose upon its ministers an oath repugnant to their consciences. The negotiation with Rome occupied some time: its failure threw the king into long perplexity; and on the 23d December, he had still not intimated his determination. In the forenoon of that day, the deputy Camus, ever foremost in the assault upon his old patrons, moved that the president should wait upon the king, and inquire his reasons for delaying to sanction the decree. This motion was not even opposed; from the absence, it would seem, of the members of the *Coté-Droit*, and the lack of all those necessary precautions against surprise which should be observed by legislative assemblies. Yet it was clearly contrary to the constitution, in which no mention was made of any reasons to be assigned by the king when he thought fit to withhold his sanction, and to notify his dissent, he was allowed an interval of two months. In the present instance not one had yet elapsed; nevertheless, the resolution of Camus was adopted. The answer of the king was ambiguous, but conciliatory: his desire to put the constitution into execution by sure and gentle means was the motive of the delay, joined to his respect for religion; and he begged the Assembly to repose confidence in the purity of his intentions. This reply stirred to acrimony the bile of Camus; and after a bitter effusion against the pretensions of the Pope, he moved that the president should again wait upon the king, represent to him the inconveniences resulting from a longer postponement of his acceptance, and intreat him to give a definitive answer within twenty-four hours. This motion was courageously combated by the Abbé Maury, who remarked on the insidious change of the word acceptance for sanction, whereby the king was meant to be denuded of any option in his determination. It was an approved device of the *Coté-Gauche* to invest decrees peculiarly nauseous to the king with the character of constitutional acts, and thus impose them upon his involuntary acceptance. In the present case, it was argued by Barnave that measures accessory to the constitution partook of its essence; and his deduction being satisfactory to the majority, the motion of Camus was affirmed. Thus besieged, Louis had no alternative but to succumb; and in an explanatory message, he signified his acceptance of the decree of the 27th November, hoping that this proof of his confidence in the Assembly might prompt it to reciprocate the sentiment.

The Assembly was impatient to exact from its own members who were priests the swearing of the oath. Ninety-eight of them took it in a body, the very day following the acceptance of the decree by the king, but the rest declined. The 4th of January 1791 was the final term given them to comply; and on that day the hall of the Assembly was crowded in every part, whilst

outside the walls a dense multitude was collected vociferating maledictions on nonjurors. After some wrangling between the opponent parties, it was settled that the clergy should be called alphabetically to ascend the tribune, and take or refuse the oath. It was resolved, moreover, that they should not be allowed to speak, but simply to declare their acquiescence or refusal. But the fury manifested by the people in the galleries against the first three ecclesiastics who appeared and rejected the oath, showed the danger of putting them through this individual ordeal, since it exposed them to be marked for popular proscription; and it was accordingly determined that all who had not yet taken the oath should forthwith do so, or be declared recusant. Only one curate responded to this appeal, and the great bulk of the clergy was pronounced contumacious, and deposed. Men who consult the dictates of conscience, rather than those of self-interest, are at all times entitled to sympathy and respect; and it is impossible to deny the clergy of France the meed of praise for sincerity and disinterestedness. But the propriety of their conduct may be questioned; for through it all the evils of a religious schism were created. Ministers of religion are especially commissioned to promote peace and good-will amongst men; and it might be argued that this duty was paramount to any other, when the essential doctrines of faith were not involved. Drawing a different conclusion, however, only four prelates of the whole number consented to take the oath; and one of them was the former minister of state, Brienne, Archbishop of Sens, who sent back his scarlet hat to the Pope, whom he thus, on temptation, denied. Elections were held throughout France to supply the numerous vacancies in sees and benefices, and thus two bodies of clergy were placed in direct hostility. The old titulars and incumbents still claimed to be the lawful possessors, and by the devout they were regarded as the only orthodox teachers of the faith, the only acceptable dispensers of holy ordinances. The constitutional clergy, on the other hand, were stigmatised as heretical, and certainly did little, by the superior austerity of their lives, to redeem the canonical disqualification, or reconcile opinion in their favour. Many of them added to the scandal of their position by discarding the vows of their ordination, and contracting the bonds of matrimony. Thus rancour and dissension were carried into the bosom of every family; and such were the mischiefs, the frightful calamities, of this religious discord, that in time the very name of priest became odious as the type and incarnation of evil.

Oppressed and bewildered by all these scenes, Louis at last made up his mind that his only resource was to fly from a situation that had become intolerable. He sent a trusty agent, the Bishop of Pamiers, to Bouillé, to consult with him as to a plan of

evasion. Bouillé was opposed to the scheme, foreseeing all the peril of such an enterprise. He suggested another in its stead, which seemed to him more practicable, and more likely to prove successful. Since the affair of Nancy, he had gained a great accession of influence both over his army and over the population of the extensive country under his command. In fact a very general reaction had taken place towards royalist ideas, which was further increased by the ejection of the nonjuring clergy, whose cause was at first warmly espoused in those frontier provinces. Under these circumstances, Bouillé conceived that, if he could obtain a fair pretence for concentrating his forces by the alarm of a foreign invasion, he would be able to procure from the troops, from the municipalities, and from the National Guards, a demand that the king should put himself at the head of the army, in order, at a moment of such danger, to restore discipline, and dispel the spirit of revolt. Such a demand could scarcely be resisted by the Assembly, especially as it would be supported by Mirabeau, and other members of the *Coté-Gauche*. With this impression, he proposed that the Emperor of Germany should be urged to make a hostile demonstration on the frontier, which might afford the pretext he desired. Once at the head of an army, he inferred that the king would be in a position to dictate favourable terms of compromise. But this plan was not agreeable to Louis, who alleged that the emperor would not stir until he had left Paris, and recovered his liberty. Consequently, the flight to a frontier town within Bouillé's command was determined upon, to be undertaken in the course of the coming spring. Bouillé was to make all the arrangements for effecting it in safety; and a communication was established between him and the king, conducted in cipher, and passed through a faithful intermediary.

In his strait, Louis XVI. had again opened a confidential intercourse with Mirabeau, who planned a very different scheme, however, for his personal rescue, and the appropriate re-establishment of his authority. Mirabeau felt that the Revolution had gone too far; he was disgusted with the violence of the factions both in and out of the Assembly; he saw that democracy was gaining the ascendant, and that unless promptly checked, the ruin of the monarchy was sealed. He scorned, and could not play, the arts of a mere demagogue; his empire was over educated men, not over the blind multitude with its untutored instincts. He resolved, therefore, to stem and turn back the current of the Revolution. He had sufficient means at his disposal, as he thought. In the provinces, the Assembly was becoming unpopular; in the late elections for members of the departmental and district councils, the men of moderate views had in the majority of cases been preferred to those who professed ultra principles. From this he

drew the inference, that the opinion of the country generally was in favour of a middle course—of a modified form of government, equally removed from despotism and from democracy. Consequently, he would remove the king from Paris, the seat of the Revolution, dissolve the present Assembly, and convoke another at Lyons, the second city in the kingdom, and the centre of a quiet, well-disposed community. The king should issue a proclamation setting forth his reasons for annulling the constitution framed by the National Assembly, and propounding one in its stead founded upon a collation of the instructions given to the members of the States-General by their constituents in 1789. The success of such a scheme evidently depended upon the preparations. In the first place, Mirabeau proposed to gain the majority of the Assembly itself, and after this manner: the king should select fifteen leading members of the *Coté-Droit* to meet the like number of the *Coté-Gauche* chosen by Mirabeau, and these should be made to approve the projected measure, and win adherents to it in their several spheres. Through Talon, civil lieutenant of Paris, a man who had an extensive connection with all parties, and was the medium of distributing bribes among the deputies, and through Laporte, intendant of the civil list, who supplied the funds, partisans among the populace and the Jacobins were to be retained and put in activity, to develop those means which had so often been brought to bear with effect in a contrary and anarchical sense. Mirabeau took upon himself to manage the departments; and, by emissaries and correspondence, he was satisfied that he could safely count upon the concurrence of thirty-six. If he effected his object, the promises of the king were boundless: in the interim, he exacted a liberal instalment; he received a gross sum of 600,000 livres, and a monthly pension of 50,000 more.

The king was desirous that Mirabeau should seek the co-operation of Lafayette and Bouillé. With the latter, indeed, Mirabeau was well content to form a coalition, but with the former there were insuperable obstacles, derived from the sternness of his principles. An interview, nevertheless, was arranged between them, which ended, as was sure to be the case, in yet greater alienation. Henceforth Mirabeau plotted to procure Lafayette's downfall, and wrest from him the command of the Parisian National Guard. He instigated the Duke of Orleans to revenge the indignity he had suffered at his hands; and that weak prince, who had allied himself with the ultra faction, and was cherished among the Jacobins, lent a ready ear to the suggestion, and employed his wealth to subsidise traducers of the civic general, who, declaiming against him on all occasions, succeeded in damaging his popularity. On the other hand, Lafayette began to dread the effects of a union between Mirabeau and Bouillé. He again made overtures to the latter; but Bouillé, flushed with the increased im-

portance of his position, was less disposed than ever to combine with him for the purposes he contemplated, the principal of which was still the maintenance of the new constitution. Dissatisfied, and now suspicious, Lafayette used his influence with Duportail, the recently-appointed minister at war, to curtail very materially the powers vested in Bouillé, and also the limits of his command. He was forbidden to move the troops without the sanction of the minister, and Alsace was put under a separate commandant. What was still more galling, some of his best regiments were taken from him, those in which he could place the greatest reliance, and his means thereby lamentably crippled. The king, who was so deeply interested in strengthening the hands of Bouillé, resisted with such might as he possessed these encroachments on his command, but unavailingly; he was obliged to sign the orders which he knew were almost equivalent to his own death-warrants. Thus intrigues of ambition, jealousy, and distrust, crossed and clashed with each other, all to the detriment of the unfortunate monarch whose relief was the common object of solicitude.

The emigration, meanwhile, continued to augment. The Count d'Artois had removed from Turin to Coblenz after the failure of his plans on the southern frontier. There he held a sort of court, to which it became the fashion among the royalists to resort. The journey from Paris to the banks of the Rhine was short, and all who wished to share in the benefits of a counter-revolution, hastened to prove their loyal zeal by a personal attendance. Those only, indeed, who gave this evidence of their devotion were regarded as true adherents of the cause, and the courageous men who remained behind to uphold the interests of the monarchy, were considered as little better than the revolutionists themselves. It is a fact they would have been treated with neglect, if not with harshness, had those exiles at any time contrived to achieve the triumph they were continually boasting was at hand. Their language and conduct were preposterous in an extreme degree: nothing could exceed the fierceness of their threats: and to show that they were not uttered in vain, they formed themselves into regiments, and practised manœuvres under the command of the Prince of Condé. It was impossible that the Assembly should view such proceedings with indifference, and measures had often been suggested against emigrants, when an incident occurred which forced the subject, in its whole extent, upon immediate attention. The king's aunts, two elderly spinsters, relics of by-gone times, felt qualms of uneasiness at the wreck of institutions dear to their hearts, and in their affliction turned to Rome, as a resting-place for their wounded spirits. Louis was willing to gratify a wish he could not condemn on the part of his venerable relatives, and allowed them permission to depart. Doubtless he was well pleased they should get out of the kingdom before

he began to bestir himself in his own projects. Their departure, which took place on the 19th February, occasioned a considerable ferment in Paris, aggravated by a report that the Count de Provence meditated a similar step. Crowds, as usual, gathered in the gardens of the Palais-Royal and Tuileries, and it required the personal assurance of Monsieur that he would never separate himself from the king, to calm the tumult. But the affair was discussed with great keenness in the Assembly. Barnave and the Lameths contended that the princesses should be recalled; Mirabeau argued that they had infringed no law, and could not be detained; Menou put an end to the debate by calling to mind the ridicule the Assembly incurred by deliberating whether two old ladies, who preferred it, should hear mass at Rome instead of at Paris. Nevertheless, the subject of a law upon emigration, and upon the particular obligations as to residence of the members of the royal family, was referred to the constitution committee. That committee presented a report, through Chapelier, upon each of these topics. The one touching the residence of the royal family was unsatisfactory to the Côté-Gauche, since it found that the king only, and the presumptive heir to the throne, were bound to reside within the kingdom; but no decision was pronounced upon the subject, Mirabeau availing to have it indefinitely adjourned. In the report upon emigration generally, it was premised that no law could be devised limiting the right of citizens to travel beyond the boundaries of France compatible with the constitution. Upon hearing this admission, Mirabeau proposed that the project of law should not be read. The Côté-Gauche, on the contrary, uttered loud cries of *Yes, yes! read, read!* which were met by counter-cries from the Côté-Droit of *No, no! don't read!* The former, however, prevailed in strength of lungs, and the project of law was read. It enacted that a council should be appointed by the National Assembly, vested with *dictatorial power* to grant or refuse applications for license to leave the kingdom, and that all who left it, or remained out of it, without the authority of such council, should be deemed rebels, and forfeit the rights of French citizens. Indignant murmurs burst from all parts of the hall at the reading of this extraordinary proposition. It proved, as Mirabeau justly observed, that no law was practicable upon the subject which did not violate the principles of justice. 'A law upon emigration,' he said, 'is a thing out of your power, and I declare emphatically that I shall consider myself absolved from any oath of fidelity to those who shall be infamous enough to institute a dictatorial commission.' He was interrupted by clamours from the Côté-Gauche. 'Yes; I vow,' he repeated with vehemence, 'if you pass a law on emigration, I will pay no obedience to it.' The ultra members of the Côté-Gauche lost all patience, and vociferated furiously against him. He, undaunted, darted his fiery gaze

upon them. 'Silence, ye thirty malignants!' he cried in a voice of thunder. 'I have but three words more to say. I have all my life fought against despotism, and those who interrupt me may be assured I will do so to the end of my days.' He resumed his seat amidst unanimous applause. His motion for an absolute repudiation of the project of law was, however, defeated by the adoption of one for a simple adjournment. The court and the Côté-Droit not being in the secret of his understanding with the king, were somewhat amazed at this new line of conduct pursued by Mirabeau, and counted with rapture upon the consequences of so important a division in the ranks of their enemies.

The movement against Lafayette grew in consistency and substance, or rather, to speak more correctly, against the actual predominance of the middle classes. The Jacobins, or what may be called, for definition's sake, the Orleanist portion of them, were equally averse with the royalists to the peaceful consolidation of the constitutional monarchy, and they planned a second revolution to prevent it. As the first had been signalled and carried by the capture of the Bastille, so, it seemed to them, should be the second by the demolition of another state prison. The castle of Vincennes, situated a few miles out of Paris, which was undergoing repair for the reception of prisoners under the authority of the Assembly and Commune, presented itself as a fitting object of attack. On the morning of the 28th February, the people of the faubourgs collected in thousands, and moved in rabble array to the spot indicated. An assault was made upon the outer gate, and in a few minutes the mob was in possession of the place, dispersed all over it, and engaged in the work of destruction. Lafayette had followed with several battalions of the National Guards, both horse and foot, and with a train of artillery. Upon his arrival, he ordered the rioters to desist, and, having so imposing a force with him, was speedily obeyed by the bulk of them; but some, more audacious than the rest, disregarded his summons, and continued their devastation before his face. These he forthwith attacked, and after some show of resistance, took sixty-four of the ring-leaders prisoners. He then prepared to march back to Paris, placing the prisoners in the midst of his troops. The mass of the mob he drove before him, hurling curses at his head, in baffled rage. On reaching the first barrier, he found it closed against him, and defended by an additional body of insurgents, among whom figured one of his own officers, Santerre, at the head of a battalion of the Guards. Lafayette was ever cool and intrepid in moments of emergency. He advanced to the gate, and commanded it to be immediately opened. His firmness overawed the multitude, and no opposition was attempted. He marched into the city, and lodged his prisoners in the jail of the Conciergerie, but he was pursued by the howls and execrations of the

people. He was happy to seize an occasion of retrieving his waning popularity, and availed himself of one that opportunely offered. Fearing that an attack was meditated upon the palace, many royalist gentlemen, to the number of 300, had flocked to the Tuileries with arms to defend the person of the king. The National Guards on duty at the palace viewed their presence at first with jealousy, at last with anger, and insisted that they should be disarmed and turned out. The king came forth to address his zealous partisans; and thanking them for their alacrity and devotion, besought them, for the sake of peace, to yield up their arms and depart. They deposited their arms, accordingly, in an antechamber to the king's apartment, and taking leave of his majesty, with sorrowful hearts proceeded to quit the palace. As they did so, however, they were grossly maltreated by the National Guards, who searched them for concealed weapons, struck, and kicked them down the stairs with great brutality. Lafayette, hearing of this event on his return, hurried to the palace, and seized the arms which the king had induced the gentlemen to intrust with him. He issued an order of the day also, in which he denounced this muster of royalists in terms sufficiently strong to conciliate for him the lost favour of the Jacobins. Several poniards being found among the arms thus appropriated, their bearers were styled *Knights of the Dagger*; a term of reproach which was afterwards applied to all who were in the habit of frequenting the palace, or paying court to the royal family.

Mirabeau had spoken for the last time in the Assembly. His vigorous frame had sunk under the weight of labour and the exhaustion of dissipation. He had been incessantly occupied with his great scheme to deliver the king, and set up a government of his own manipulation. He was preparing means as vast as his projects. He consulted daily with the minister Montmorin, and all the resources of the executive power were placed at his disposal. In every part of France he took measures of preparation. With Bouillé he opened a direct intercourse,* secured his hearty approval of the plan he contemplated, and arranged with him how he was to co-operate in its execution. All was rapidly verging to maturity; the king and queen were on the tiptoe of expectation, confident in the capacity of the mighty champion they had lured to their defence; an agitation began to be manifested, indicative of some brewing catastrophe, and which warned to hasten the development, when death interposed, and crushed the promising fabric. Mirabeau was seized with his fatal malady towards

* M. Thiers, in his History of the French Revolution, positively denies that Mirabeau had any direct communication with Bouillé; but as he quotes no authority, his own assertion is valueless in opposition to that of Bouillé, a man of honour and veracity.

the end of March. He lay on the bed of sickness for several days. He knew his end was approaching, but he was calm and collected. Anxious friends surrounded him, and he conversed with tranquillity. He did not conceal the lofty estimate he held of himself. 'Have a care,' he said to an attendant who propped him on his pillow; 'you support the greatest head in France.' He discoursed much on the critical state in which he left the country, and was filled with forebodings of disaster. 'We shall perish,' he said, 'and without even the sad honours of a civil war. France will perish by dissolution.' A short time before he died, while many stood by gazing in silence on the painful struggles of mortality, or dissolved in tears, he said, 'My friends, it is not for me you have to weep, but for the monarchy which descends with me into the grave.' He expired on the 2d of April. His death was regarded as a national calamity. The Assembly decreed him a public funeral, and his remains were attended to the grave by the deputies, the authorities of the department and municipality, the electors, the clubs, the National Guards, the whole population of Paris. His body was placed by the side of Descartes, and upon the pediment of the church in which he was interred was put an inscription—*To great men a grateful country*. This church was henceforth to be a pantheon devoted to the ashes of those only who were judged worthy to repose therein by the National Assembly. A general mourning for several days testified the heart-felt conviction of the great bereavement France sustained in the death of Mirabeau.

He died at a moment fortunate for himself, in the zenith of his fame and influence. He was universally mourned by all classes of the community, and by none more sincerely than Louis XVI. This prince had himself been afflicted with a serious distemper. By nature gross in body, active exercise was essential to his health. This he could not take in sufficient quantity, and he swelled to an unhealthy corpulence.* Humours stagnated, and produced fever. His illness occasioned great alarm and anxiety: the Assembly ordered that a bulletin of his condition should be communicated to it daily. In a few days the more dangerous symptoms subsided, and the king was pronounced convalescent. A *Te Deum* was sung in Notre Dame to celebrate the event, and Paris was illuminated. But the interest manifested on this occasion must have been at least evanescent, for shortly afterwards he was subjected to a most grievous insult. The cause arose from that constant source of strife and animosity, the religious schism.

* 'For six months past, the king, who had been accustomed all his life to violent exercise, which was necessary to his constitution, used no more than going in the morning along the terrace of the palace to see his son. This was the ordinary promenade of the king, and it was requisite it should be over before noon, at which hour the gates of the Tuileries were opened to the public.'—*Weber*, vol. ii. p. 48.

Louis, like all the devout Catholics, looked with aversion upon the priests who had taken the oath to the civil constitution of the clergy as apostates from the faith, and deemed their ministration unholy and noxious. He had dismissed his confessor, who was one of the conformists; and now, upon the approach of Easter, the season of the most solemn rites in the Catholic church, he was tormented with doubts what alternative to follow. If he took the sacrament in a church, it must be at the hands of a constitutional minister; if he took it in his private chapel, he might receive it from an orthodox priest, but he thereby incurred the danger of exciting a popular commotion. He had, moreover, scruples of conscience whether or not he was in a fit state to partake the communion of the Holy Supper, from the sin he had committed in sanctioning the civil constitution, the atonement for which was only mental, and expressed by repentance. The Bishop of Clermont, whose direction he sought in this difficulty, held that the guilt was too indelible to be washed out by anything short of a practical reversal; and the king concluded that the only way to escape the dilemma was to pass the Passion week at Saint-Cloud.* Accordingly, on the 18th April he entered his carriage, with the queen and his family, to proceed thither. Rumours of the doubts that distracted the royal mind meanwhile had been circulated through the capital, added to others that the journey of the king was not confined to Saint-Cloud, but would be extended to Compiègne or Fontainebleau. This was sufficient to rouse the ire of the populace, who congregated from all parts on the Place du Carrouzel, and stopped the carriage of the king. Lafayette came up with the National Guards; but so general and inveterate was the hatred of the recusant clergy, who were stigmatised as 'the refractory,' that they not only refused to act, but joined the mob in murmurs and execrations. Lafayette tried in vain all the powers of his rhetoric upon them; they were not to be moved. After sitting amidst this tumult for an hour and a-half, the king returned to the palace amidst the most furious shouts from the exulting multitude.

On the following day the king appeared in the Assembly, and complained of the violence used to prevent him from going to Saint-Cloud, remarking that it was essential he should be permitted to prosecute his intention, in order to demonstrate that he was free, and not under coercion, as was represented throughout Europe. The president, in his reply, evaded the subject, and among empty commonplaces, assured the king that if the faction of the refractory were but removed from between him and the people, all would be happiness and tranquillity. Thus Louis was refused even the poor solace of sympathy. Lafayette, however, in some degree avenged the outrage. He resigned the command of the

* This singular correspondence between Louis XVI. and the Bishop of Clermont is given at length by Bertrand de Molleville, in his *Annals*, vol. iv. pp. 18-21.

National Guards, and resisted all importunities to resume it. He adhered inflexibly to this purpose, until all the sixty battalions composing it had signed a pledge to obey the law and their general's commands in future, and the Commune had resolved that a company of the Paid Guard, consisting of the old French Guards, which had been most conspicuous in the mutiny, should be disbanded. Upon these terms he consented to retain his post, much to the chagrin of the Jacobins, who hoped to derive from the difference the opportunity of supplanting him by a man more after their own hearts.

The death of Mirabeau had caused the king to recur to the plan of evasion concerted with Bouillé. Concurrently with that, however, he entertained other schemes. Montmorin proposed to him one substantially the same as he had himself intrusted to Breteuil; and the Lameths, perhaps touched by a tardy remorse—for they owed their education to the bounty of the queen—likewise tendered their counsels to him. All these plans Louis embraced, and kept in operation at the same time. Montmorin, through the medium of M. Alphonse de Durfort, opened a communication with Calonne, who directed the emigrant court, in consequence of which an interview was held on the 20th May between the Emperor of Germany and the Count d'Artois at Mantua. At this interview it was arranged that 100,000 troops should be assembled on the different frontiers of France, by Austria, the Empire, Sardinia, Switzerland, and Spain, to overawe the revolutionists, and compel them to reinstate the king in his former authority. In the interim, the king was exhorted to banish the idea of leaving Paris clandestinely, but, on the contrary, to profess unbounded zeal for the Revolution, and lavish every effort to render himself popular. This course coincided with the advice given him by the Lameths, and he had already in part adopted it. By his directions Montmorin wrote a circular letter to all the ambassadors of France at foreign courts, dated the 23d April 1791, wherein he instructed them to make known that the king most cordially acquiesced in the constitution which had been substituted for the old government of France, that he was perfectly free in all his actions, enjoyed complete happiness, and regarded as his worst enemies those who maintained the reverse. The very exaggeration of the language used in this celebrated manifesto was conclusive of its utter falseness; but Louis XVI. had, in these hours of tribulation, brought himself to act with profound dissimulation and duplicity. The Assembly was in an ecstasy of joy upon receiving a copy of the letter, and charged the president to wait upon the king with a numerous deputation, to return him thanks for so signal a proof of his condescension and love. In his address, the president said, 'The hydra of faction, sire, had a hundred heads; you have struck off the last. I presume to say to your

majesty that you will be happy, for you have now secured the happiness of the people.' Louis replied, 'I am infinitely sensible of the justice which the National Assembly renders me. If the bottom of my heart could be read, only sentiments justifying the confidence of the nation would be found there: every distrust would be banished; we should all be happy.'

His heart, nevertheless, beat with hopes and feelings of a very different nature. He had completed his preparations to depart for Montmedy, a fortress on the eastern frontier. So secretly were these conducted, that his most confidential counsellors were ignorant of them. Montmorin himself was kept in the dark; and so little suspicion had he of any such design, that, on the occasion of an article in a newspaper asserting the contemplated flight of the king, he wrote, with the consent, and at the express order, of Louis, to the president of the Assembly, denying the allegation 'on his responsibility, his head, and his honour.' So positive an assurance from him was deemed quite satisfactory, and all apprehensions were quieted. The departure was at first planned to take place in May; but at length the 15th of June was the day definitively fixed. The journey from Paris to Chalons was under the management of the queen, who employed in the arrangements a young Swedish officer, the Count de Fersen, who had devoted himself with chivalrous gallantry to her service. From Chalons to Montmedy, Bouillé was to provide escorts and relays of horses at the different stations. The day of departure was subsequently altered to the 19th, and again to the 20th, a postponement that proved disastrous. At half-past ten at night of the 20th June, the royal family retired as usual to rest, Lafayette took his leave, satisfied that all was safe, and the palace was hushed in repose. Instead of going to bed, the king, the queen, the Princess Elizabeth, the princess-royal, and the dauphin, with his governess, Madame de Tourzel, assembled in a chamber which communicated with one of the courts of the palace. From this they issued separately, accompanied by three Body Guards, who had been procured for the occasion. Madame Elizabeth and the princess-royal left first, with one of the Guards for a guide, followed at some distance by Madame de Tourzel with the dauphin. They proceeded to the corner of a street on the Petit Carrouzel, where they found a hackney-coach in waiting, driven by Fersen, disguised as a coachman, in which they immediately seated themselves. They were shortly joined by the king with the second Guardsman; but after an anxious suspense of half an hour, there was no appearance of the queen. She had been the last to leave the palace, and as neither she nor the Guardsman with her was acquainted with the streets of Paris, and not venturing to make inquiries, they had lost their way, and wandered far wide of the mark. At length they were obliged to ask direction, and finally

reached the destined spot without any accident, although they had passed close by Lafayette's carriage, surrounded by men carrying torches. The whole party being thus collected, Fersen drove to the gate of St Martin, a little beyond which stood a travelling carriage with six horses, under the charge of a postilion. The transfer from one vehicle into the other was soon made: Fersen mounted the box, the postilion bestrided one of the leaders, the Guardsmen jumped up behind, the hackney-coach was left to its fate on the highway, and in a few minutes the illustrious fugitives were clear of Paris.

At Claye, six leagues from Paris, Fersen left them, to provide for his own safety by a retreat to Brussels, whither the Count de Provence and his consort had likewise directed their course. The Guardsmen were mounted on horseback, to serve as couriers, it having been arranged that one should keep in advance of the carriage at least two hours, to give notice of its approach. This arrangement was in the sequel not attended to—an instance of carelessness altogether unaccountable. Everything succeeded perfectly as far as Chalons, which was reached at five in the evening. Here the first mischance occurred. A detachment of troops under Choiseul and Goguelas had been posted at the bridge of Sommeville since an early hour of the day to receive the king, who was expected to arrive by two in the afternoon at the latest. The people both of Chalons and of St Menchould, between which the troops were stationed, took umbrage at their long stay; and the National Guards collecting, began to threaten them with an attack. It was in vain Choiseul represented that he was waiting to convoy a remittance of specie; they disbelieved his assertion, and insisted upon his withdrawing. Fearing to excite a commotion, which would be surely detrimental to the king, he judged it wiser to yield, and taking a cross cut through the country, fell back on Varennes. This circumstance tended no doubt to quicken observation. The king's carriage, when it drove into Chalons, was regarded with curious attention; and although the horses were changed with rapidity, Louis was recognised by an inhabitant of the town, who hastened to apprise the mayor of his discovery. The mayor, fortunately, was a very indifferent revolutionist, and he persuaded the man that he must be mistaken. At St Menchould the same danger was incurred. The son of the postmaster, Drouet by name, had been present at the federation, and he at once knew the king, who very imprudently exposed his countenance at the window of the carriage. He did not venture, nevertheless, to give the alarm, as a strong body of troops lined the streets, the purpose of whose muster he intuitively divined. He resolved, however, to follow the carriage, and have it stopped at the first opportunity. The next stage was Clermont, which the king passed through without difficulty.

Beyond Clermont, the road separated into two—one leading to Verdun, the other to Varennes. The latter was the route taken by the king. Drouet, who was in hot pursuit, thought Verdun the most probable destination, and struck off into the road leading to it. He would have thus missed his prey, but for an accidental encounter with a return postilion, who informed him no carriage had passed that way. He accordingly diverged into a cross road, which conducted him to Varennes, where, by dint of diligence, he arrived before the king. He lost not a moment in adopting measures to arrest him. Hastening to the house of Sausse, procureur of the Commune, he communicated his important discovery to that functionary, who forthwith despatched messengers to call out the National Guards, and to summon those from the neighbouring towns of Verdun and Stenay. In the meantime, Drouet, with three or four resolute assistants—among whom was a man named Billaud, afterwards a chief ruler of his countrymen—proceeded to block up the bridge dividing the two parts of the town with overturned carts and carriages. On the other hand, the precautions taken to insure the safe passage of the king were most defective. A troop of sixty hussars had been placed in the town, under the command of an officer eighteen years of age, who was not made acquainted with the real object of his mission, but strictly enjoined to keep himself and his soldiers constantly on the alert. The youth deemed it more pleasant to repose at his lodgings, whilst the hussars were quartered in a barrack at some distance. Varennes not being a post town, a relay of horses had been sent by Bouillé to meet the king, but which, instead of being posted on the side of the town by which he was to arrive, as had been arranged, was kept on the far side beyond the bridge. When Louis arrived, therefore, about eleven at night, he found no horses ready for him at the place indicated, which was a farm-house at the entrance of the town; and seeing no person in the street, he and the queen alighted to knock at the doors of the houses, in the hope of arousing some of those appointed to assist them. Unable to obtain any favourable response, they returned to the carriage, and directed the postilions to drive across the bridge. At this moment Drouet with his party appeared, and civilly requested the travellers to accompany him to the house of the procureur, that their passports might be examined. The king saw no alternative but to acquiesce, as it was evident force would be used if he resisted. The carriage was accordingly led to the procureur's, and Sausse himself coming out, proposed that the party should descend and enter his house, whilst their horses were refreshed to continue the journey. No hint was given of the recognition, and the king thought it best to accept the invitation, considering it advisable to assume a confidence he was far from feeling.

The National Guards were speedily roused; and such was the promptitude and ability displayed by Sausse, that the barrack of the hussars was surrounded before their juvenile commander was awakened from his sluggishness and could issue any orders. When this preventive measure was taken, and a sufficient force collected round his house, Sausse ordered the tocsin to be sounded, which being repeated from village to village, in less than two hours Varennes was filled with several hundred men under arms. Throwing off the disguise he had hitherto maintained, he now flatly told the king he was known and arrested. Louis attempted to deny himself, but he only provoked abuse and reproaches. The queen interposed with an air of dignity. 'If you recognise him for your king,' she said, 'speak to him with the respect you owe him.' The king, perceiving that further denial was useless, avowed himself to those assembled in the room, and with simple and earnest eloquence appealed to them in behalf of himself and his family. He said that he had left Paris only to escape from thralldom, and to ascertain the true feelings of the nation; that the happiness of his people was the first object of his solicitude, and that he was prepared to make any sacrifices to insure it. He offered to place himself in the hands of the National Guards of Varennes, to be conducted by them to Montmedy or any other town they chose, where he might have an opportunity of maturely revolving the constitution; and he intreated, above all things, not to be led back to Paris. His discourse made a sensible impression on all who heard it, and even Sausse was much affected; but he stated that it was now too late, that his own life would be forfeited if he allowed the king to take any other route than that of Paris. Meanwhile, the hussars under Choiseul and Goguelas made their appearance at the entrance of Varennes, and found their ingress barred by the National Guards. After some parleying, however, they were admitted, and advancing into the town, drew up in front of Sausse's house. The leaders entered it to learn the particulars of the event; and Goguelas quickly coming out again, announced to the troops that the king and queen were forcibly detained in arrest. He ordered them to draw their swords, and declare they would be faithful to their monarch. But they remained motionless, and answered him with shouts of *Vive la nation!* A pistol-shot was fired at him, and he retreated wounded into the house. The hussars in barracks were still immured within their quarters; their young commander had taken horse, and fled for his life. During the night, skilful preparations were made to oppose Bouillé, in case he approached to rescue the king. Strong barricades were erected, cannon planted, and numerous bodies of National Guards disposed to arrest his progress. It was six in the morning before the defences were completed, and a sufficient number of National Guards mustered

to escort the king on his return. At that hour a messenger from Paris galloped into the town.

The king's evasion from the Tuileries had not been discovered until eight in the morning. Lafayette and Montmorin were the first apprised of it. Both were justly alarmed at the consequences to themselves: the first was exposed to the charge of connivance; the latter to that of deliberate perfidy. Summoning his aides-de-camp, Lafayette charged them with written orders to pursue the king on the different routes, and cause him, if overtaken, to be arrested. He adopted the presumption that he had been carried off by the enemies of the nation, and this idea of an abduction was supported as the most appropriate to express the event. All Paris was in commotion as the news spread. The populace poured from the faubourgs, some proceeding to seize the barriers, to prevent egress from the city, others to beset the houses of Lafayette and Montmorin, against whom the first ebullitions of rage were directed. The Assembly met, and showed itself fully equal to the emergency. With composure and dignity it assumed all the powers of the government. It summoned the ministers to the bar, and ordered them to put its decrees in execution as implicitly as if sanctioned by the king. It issued a proclamation, exhorting the people to observe order, and place confidence in its wisdom and capacity to guard the commonwealth from harm. It directed that the ambassadors of foreign powers should be made acquainted with the intention of the French nation to cultivate the existing relations of amity. It ordained that all the authorities, civil and military, should take a new oath of fidelity to the law and the nation; and despatched commissioners into the departments to administer it, and superintend efficient measures to establish the authority of the Assembly. It confirmed the instructions already issued by Lafayette, and confided to Romeuf, one of his aides-de-camp, its decree to seize and detain the person of the king. Laporte, intendant of the civil list, presented to it a memorial which had been enclosed to him in a private note from the king. This memorial, wholly written in Louis's own hand, was read. It contained an exposition of the motives that had led him to embrace the desperate expedient of flight. The language and tone of this document were unsuitable and undignified. It recapitulated all the wrongs and insults to which he had been subjected, beginning with the indecent triumph awarded to Necker in 1789. It traced the course of the Revolution with minuteness—dwelt upon the sacrifices of the king in his declaration of the 23d June—exposed the disregard paid to the royal prerogative and dignity in the digest of the constitution—denounced the niggardliness displayed in the apportionment of the civil list—and protested against the appropriation of the property of the crown. The spirit that animated this composition evinced the utter blindness

of the king's advisers to the real nature of the Revolution, and convicted Louis, under his own hand, of a continued course of hypocrisy. It was not difficult for the Assembly to reply with force and effect. In the counter-manifesto it published, it arrogated for the first time the title of the Constituent National Assembly, and claimed all the attributes of a sovereign convention. Starting from such a point of view, it felt no difficulty in repelling the complaints of Louis; and with the advantage of temper and superiority, it rebuked him for his vain pretensions and frivolous regrets.

Romeuf had followed the right track, and arrived at Varennes as the preparations were completed for the king's return. He delivered the decree of the Assembly to Sausse, which that personage had already so well anticipated. The queen recognised the young aid-de-camp, and called him to her. She reproached him for accepting such a mission, and indulged in a passionate outburst against Lafayette, upon whom she charged all their misfortunes. Romeuf sought to appease her by assurances that both he and his general had entertained no expectation of being able to overtake the king, and that the latter was, in truth, far from being the enemy she seemed to suppose. 'He is, I say,' the queen exclaimed; 'he has nothing in his head but the United States and the American republic. He will see what a French republic turns out. But, sir, let me see the decree you have brought.' Romeuf handed her a copy. 'The insolent wretches!' she cried, and threw the paper from her. It fell on the bed in which the dauphin and the young princess were sleeping; she snatched it up again, and flung it on the floor. 'It will pollute the bed of my children!' she said with scorn and rage. Romeuf regarded her with an expression of sorrow and reproof, which she catching, checked herself, and resumed a befitting calmness.*

Bouillé, meanwhile, was hastening up with forces to rescue the royal family, and already a vanguard of 100 hussars under Deslon had appeared at the outskirts of Varennes. Being refused access by the National Guards, Deslon demanded leave to enter alone, and receive orders from the king. His request was granted, and he was conducted to the presence of Louis. He found him in a state of stupor, and unable to comprehend what he said to him. He had to repeat three times over that Bouillé was on the way with the regiment of Royal Allemand, and desired to know his wishes, before the prince awoke to the sense of his intimation, when he replied, 'You may tell him I am a prisoner; that I fear

* The most interesting and authentic details of the flight of Louis XVI. are to be found in 'Weber's Memoirs,' which are enriched by two genuine contributions—one from the princess-royal, afterwards the Duchess d'Angoulême; and the other from M. de Fontanges, Archbishop of Toulouse, who gathered the particulars from the queen herself.—*Vide Weber*, vol. ii. pp. 53-146.

he can do nothing for me; but that I request he will do all he can.' The queen spoke to Deslon in German, and complained bitterly of the usage they had met with. She still hoped to be relieved, and sought to delay the departure as long as possible; but the fatal moment came, and at eight o'clock the captives were led to their carriage, now turned towards Paris. The royal family and Madame de Tourzel continued to occupy the inside, whilst the three Guardsmen were bound on the box in front. The carriage was escorted by National Guards on foot, replaced from time to time by detachments furnished by the towns and villages on the road. The progress was of course slow, and the journey most painful. The weather was sultry, and the dust raised by the multitude of pedestrians filled the air to suffocation. Besides, taunts, insults, and menaces were proffered on all sides; exciting apprehensions of the most gloomy character. Near St Menehould, an imprudent royalist, who had ventured to approach the carriage, and repeat some words of comfort to the king and queen, was seized and slaughtered before their eyes. It was late on the second day before they reached Chalons, and there they were met by three commissioners deputed by the Assembly to conduct them to Paris. These commissioners were Barnave, Latour-Maubourg, and Pétion—all members of the Côté-Gauche, but varying materially in sentiments. The two former were constitutionalists, but the first more ultra in his notions than the second, whilst the third was an avowed republican. Two of them, Barnave and Pétion, got into the carriage with the royal family; Madame de Tourzel removing into the chariot of Latour-Maubourg. The company of men whom they regarded with abhorrence was naturally offensive and disagreeable to the king and queen, and increased the irksomeness of their situation. Barnave, indeed, was respectful; and soon an animated conversation sprung up between him and Louis, in which the queen also joined; and to their mutual surprise, they found many prepossessions on each side dispelled. The young patriot gained rapidly on the esteem, and almost the affection, of the queen; and long before they reached Paris, she had begun to regard him in the light of a friend. He on his part was charmed by the frankness and good sense of the king, and, more than all, by the fascination of beauty in distress. Pétion, on the other hand, behaved with great brutality. He boasted of his republican predilections with indecent obtrusiveness; and though knowing the exalted piety of the Princess Elizabeth, at whose side he sat, he spoke with contempt of religion. The princess rebuked him with spirit, and a curious dialogue ensued between them on the interesting topic of the truth of Christianity. In maintaining it, the princess delivered herself with an eloquence and fervour which disconcerted the cold rationalist, and put him to the blush. It was not only in

the opinions he broached that he rendered himself obnoxious, but by the coarseness of his deportment and manners. He picked the bones of fowls with his teeth, and threw them out of the window, at the imminent risk of hitting the king on the face. Taking the little dauphin on his knees, he passed his fingers through the child's fair curly hair, and becoming heated in an argument, he pulled it roughly, and made the boy cry with pain. 'Give me my son,' the queen indignantly exclaimed; 'he is accustomed to kindness and respect, which unfit him for such familiarities!' Such the striking vicissitude of fortune, which had humbled the most absolute of monarchs, and subjected him to the studied contumely of an upstart plebeian, elated by a sudden elevation which had turned his head and seared his heart.

At Meaux, a detachment of the Parisian National Guard received the carriage. On the fifth day, the 26th of June, the melancholy procession entered Paris, making a circuit to reach the route by the Champs Elysées, that the people might have a better opportunity of witnessing the spectacle of their monarch led in captivity. The National Guards lined the way with arms reversed, as on a day of public mourning, and a dead stillness reigned; for placards had been numerously posted with the words: *Whoso applauds the king, shall be beaten with rods; whoso insults him, shall be hanged.* On approaching the palace, however, the crowd became threatening; and it was with difficulty the guards resisted the pressure. When the carriage stopped in front of the great door, furious cries were raised, especially against the queen; and it required great exertions on the part of Lafayette and a deputation of the Assembly to get the royal family safely into the palace. The queen was the last to alight, and she was borne on the arms of two deputies, the Duke d'Aiguillon and the Viscount de Noailles; whom, regarding as bitter enemies, she manifested distrust of their intentions, and reluctantly yielded herself to their protection.

Thus ended the sad attempt of Louis XVI. to escape from bondage.* The scheme was well planned and successfully executed in what seemed its most difficult part—the undiscovered departure from Paris; and failed chiefly through the defect of vigilance in the military commanders. Bouillé ought to have been nearer the line of route in person; for although the king was nine hours in Varennes, he had left it no less than two before Bouillé reached that town, when all chance of effecting a

* 'The first time that I saw her majesty after the fatal catastrophe of the journey to Varennes, was just after leaving her bed. Her appearance was not much altered, but after the first words of kindness she addressed to me, she took off her cap and told me to remark the effect grief had produced upon her hair. In a single night, it had turned as gray as that of a woman seventy years old. I will not attempt to describe the sensations that oppressed me.'—*Campan*, vol. ii. p. 149.

rescue was gone. All he could do in behalf of the king was to write to the president of the National Assembly, taking upon himself the entire blame of the enterprise. The unfortunate issue of the affair is to be regretted, and even was so generally at the time; by all, indeed, but the stern constitutionalists, who feared equally to see the king at the head of an army, and the Revolution pass into the hands of those who wished to uproot the monarchy. These formed, in reality, but a section of the Assembly placed between the two extremes of the Côté-Gauche; the one consisting of temperate monarchists, the other of now declared republicans. This latter party was growing rapidly in force and favour outside the walls of the Assembly, but within it was comparatively insignificant. Camus, Pétion, Rewbell, and Robespierre, were its chief leaders. They strove zealously to turn the king's flight to account, and urged that he should be at once deposed and brought to trial. But the majority was content to suspend him provisionally from the exercise of the royal power, appoint guards to keep incessant watch on him, the queen, and the heir-apparent,* and ordain a rigid inquiry into the circumstances of the evasion, from which Louis and Marie-Antoinette were not exempt, in order that criminal proceedings might be instituted against the guilty. The investigation in question was referred to seven of the standing committees. The king was thus constituted a close prisoner in the Tuileries, until the Assembly thought fit to declare what was to become of him. But whatever position might be hereafter assigned him in the State, it was clear that the royal authority could never, in his person at least, be so resuscitated as to uphold the fabric of government. Respect for the individual and for the office was alike lost, and no efforts, even of the constitutionalists, could avail to revive it.

* This duty was most rigorously performed, the guards keeping watch even in the bedchambers at night. After a time, on the king's remonstrance against the indecency of such a step with regard to the queen, the sentinel on her was posted in a small antechamber; but the door of the bedroom was not allowed to be shut. One night, after getting into bed, the queen was unable to sleep; so, lighting a candle, she began to read. Her guard perceiving the light, entered the room, opened the curtains, and seated himself familiarly on the bed, saying, "I see you cannot sleep, let us have a chat; it will be better for you than reading." The queen restrained her indignation, and mildly remonstrated with him that it was his duty to leave her in tranquillity.—*Fontanges in Weber's Memoires*, vol. ii. p. 144.

CHAPTER V.

WAR DECLARED AGAINST AUSTRIA—INSURRECTIONS OF THE 20TH JUNE AND 10TH AUGUST—SUSPENSION OF THE KING—JULY 1791 TO AUGUST 1792.

The immediate consequences of the king's flight, therefore, was a republican interregnum, in which the executive functions were performed by the National Assembly. This was a provisional state which parties sought to terminate to their respective advantage. The moderates of the *Côté-Gauche* deemed the opportunity propitious for remodelling the constitution, and giving the crown an enlarged sphere of action, whereby Louis XVI., who was willing to lose a great deal, would be sincerely reconciled to the Revolution, and embrace it heartily. The constitutionalists thought that this cordial acquiescence would flow equally from the mere reinstatement of the king in the position he occupied previous to the evasion, and that the constitution, as already framed, ought to be maintained in its integrity. The republicanists, on the other hand, contended that Louis had clearly forfeited the crown by the intention he had manifested of leaving the kingdom and levying war on his people, and could regain it only by being purged of his meditated crime. Their views of annihilating monarchy would be well served either by subjecting the king to the ignominy of a public trial, which, even if it resulted in an acquittal, must denude him of all future respect and authority; or by deposing him, and setting in his place a child with the proverbial weakness of a regency. The members of the *Côté-Droit* abstained from taking part in the discussions that arose between the sections of the popular party, and issued a declaration to the effect, that, viewing the monarchy as destroyed, they abjured further participation in the acts of the Assembly, retaining their posts only as sentinels, to watch and interpose when they might be of service to the king, exposed as he was to the ruthless domination of rebellious subjects. It was better, perhaps, they should adopt this course, for, had they appeared prominently in the first moments of excitement, they would have only aggravated and embittered the dispute, and rendered the efforts of those who opposed the republicans and Jacobins still more difficult. These latter were supported by all the force of the popular will, which had proved so powerful in every stage of the Revolution, and consequently wielded a formidable influence. They were seconded by continual deputations from meetings and clubs, which appeared at the bar of the Assembly, and presented addresses couched in the most violent

language, stigmatising Louis XVI. as a perjured and traitor chief, and claiming to have him judged by an appeal to the voice of the nation.

The committees to which the subject had been referred, used unexampled diligence in making their report. They presented it on the 13th July. The declarations of the king and queen had been taken by three commissioners nominated by the Assembly. The king stated that the outrage of the 18th April had finally determined him to leave Paris for a frontier town, to which he was also moved by the desire of ascertaining the real sentiments of the country on the constitution, but that it had never been his intention to quit the kingdom. The queen confirmed this latter assertion, and generously acquitted all the assistants of any prior acquaintance with the scheme of evasion. Mugnet de Nanthou was the reporter of the joint committees; and after detailing the principal circumstances attending the flight of the king, he treated the question whether he had thereby rendered himself amenable to a criminal prosecution, which he solved in the negative, on the grounds that Louis XVI. had not violated any law by departing out of Paris; and that, even if he had, his person was inviolable. The chief culprit in the transgression he found to be Bouillé, who, he therefore proposed, should be impeached, together with several officers his accomplices. The rage of the republicans was unbounded at these conclusions. Pétion took the lead in denouncing the doctrine of inviolability, which he held compatible only with infallibility. He asked, 'Can a king commit murder with impunity? Shall a Nero, or a Caligula, be allowed to indulge their savage propensities, and yet command our reverence?' Indignant cries interrupted him, that it was not a Cæsar, but Louis XVI., who occupied the throne. He continued, nevertheless, to argue upon the folly and viciousness of the proposition, the applause of the galleries sustaining him against the murmurs of the Assembly. Robespierre followed in the same strain of reasoning, and surpassed Pétion in daring analogies and bitter anathemas. They were combated by Alexander Lameth, Duport, and Barnave; and after a debate of three days, the resolutions of the committees were adopted, and converted into decrees. But it was at the same time declared that the king should not be restored to the exercise of power until the completion of the constitutional act; and to appease the republican party, three specific cases were particularised, in which the king should be deemed to forfeit the throne, and be liable to impeachment for acts committed after such forfeiture.

But this concession to popular clamour served rather to inflame than to mollify the passions of the democrats. During the three days of the debate, all the usual arts of intimidation were resorted to. Crowds collected in the various places of assemblage, and

orators declaimed in gardens, squares, and at the corners of streets, inciting the people to sedition and bloodshed. The Jacobin Club passed a resolution that it no longer acknowledged a king; and the Cordeliers, a kindred association, founded by Danton, editor of a revolutionary journal, published a notice that a patriotic band had enrolled themselves as *tyrannicides*, bound by oath to put to death all who should impede the growth of French liberty. But the Assembly opposing a courageous firmness to this riotous effervescence, and disregarding the threats thus openly levelled at its freedom and independence, means were taken to foment an actual insurrection on the 17th July. No secrecy was observed in the preparations, and the municipality had timely warning of the plan to be pursued. On this Sunday morning, different musters were to take place on the site of the Bastille, and other open localities within the city, from which they would move to the field of federation, the Champ de Mars, and there sign a petition for the deposition of the king on the altar of the country. The municipality immediately issued a proclamation forbidding the citizens to assemble in groups; but its authority was contemned; and although pickets of the National Guards were stationed to prevent any crowd from congregating on the site of the Bastille, a vast multitude concentrated in streams on the Champ de Mars. Danton and Camille-Desmoulins appeared as the ruling spirits of the movement, and from the top of the altar delivered inflammatory harangues, directed equally against Louis XVI. and the National Assembly. A petition had been already prepared, drawn up by Brissot, himself a member of the Commune, and chairman of its committee of inquiry; but it was set aside for another composed on the altar itself. In this the Assembly was told that it had exceeded its functions, belied the hopes of the nation, and adopted a decree which was illegal both in form and in substance; consequently, it was exhorted to convoke a fresh Assembly for the trial of Louis XVI. This petition, for such it was incongruously styled, being read, and very cordially approved, the multitude commenced to sign it at eight different points around the altar. In the midst of the pressure and tumult of this process, a woman, standing on the steps, suddenly uttered a scream, and exclaimed that she was pricked in the foot from beneath. Search being made, two men were discovered under the altar, one of them an invalid soldier with a wooden leg. What their purpose might be was not asked; they were hauled out, pinioned, and carried before a police commissary of the section of the Gros-Caillon, who, finding no charge of criminality substantiated against them, refused to order their detention. The mob revolted against this decision, and vociferated for justice against two traitors to the nation. With arms in their hands, the bloodthirsty rabble soon proceeded from words to blows: one of

the unfortunate men, who vainly protested their innocence, was stabbed in a thousand places, and promptly despatched; the other was hanged to a lamp-post, but the rope breaking, he fell to the ground alive; thereupon his head was chopped off with a hatchet, and, with that of his comrade, hoisted on the end of a pike. These two horrible trophies were then borne into the city, and paraded through the streets by a horde of men, women, and boys, who were at length charged and dispersed by a detachment of the National Guards.

Upon hearing of this atrocious deed, the municipality deputed three commissioners, accompanied by a battalion of the National Guards under Lafayette, to repair to the Champ de Mars, and endeavour, by remonstrance and persuasion, to dissolve the meeting. These commissioners entered into a friendly parley with the leaders of the people, who represented that they had met for a legal purpose, and nominated four of their body to attend the Commune, for the purpose of giving this explanation; but in the meantime, the National Guards were assailed with stones, and Lafayette was fired at by a villain named Fournier, commonly called the American, but fortunately without effect. The assassin was seized, as well as four others of the rioters; but Lafayette, with magnanimity, ordered the former to be released. Before the commissioners returned to the Hotel de Ville, the most alarming reports were circulated through the city. The murder of the two men was exaggerated into a more general slaughter, and the National Guards were said to be repulsed, and driven off the field by the Cordeliers and Jacobins combined. Moved by these sinister tidings, the National Assembly sent an injunction to the Commune to take proper steps for restoring public tranquillity. The Commune itself was in consternation, and urged by this message of the Assembly, the highest power in the State, it ordained, perhaps with some precipitancy, the proclamation of martial law. The red flag was unfurled in the Place de Grève; Bailly, with the whole municipal body, placed himself at the head of a large force of National Guards, and thus escorted, proceeded to the Champ de Mars. It was half-past seven in the evening before he reached the ground, which was still covered by a vast mass of people, comprising every age and either sex, engaged in different occupations: some crowded the steps of the altar to sign the petition; some listened to the orators, who bawled from divers stations; some danced carmagnoles to the patriotic tune of *Ca Ira*; others brandished sticks, pikes, swords, and howled execrations against king, Assembly, and Guards; the burly figure of Danton towered as the presiding genius of the scene. The appearance of the mayor and the troops, with the red flag fluttering in advance, threw this motley assemblage into the fiercest rage. All rushed forward, and drowning the voice of the mayor, who summoned

them, in terms of the law, to disperse, with shouts and yells of fury, threw among the Guards a rattling volley of stones. One ruffian took deliberate aim with his musket at Bailly, and killed a soldier immediately behind him. Lafayette ordered his men to fire, but first in the air, to try the effect of intimidation. This harmless discharge was laughed at, and only tended to exasperate the people yet more; they continued to hurl stones and other missiles, and many of the troops were seriously wounded. Then the word was given to fire in earnest, and some twenty of the insurgents were stretched on the field. The Guards now gave way to resentment and the heat of combat; they charged into the ranks of the flying mob, and executed a terrible massacre. Accounts vary as to the number slain, ranging from thirty to several hundreds; but it is sufficient that the butchery was considerable, and the populace most effectually cowed.*

Thus was the triumph of the constitutionalists secured at the expense of blood, which was one day to be fearfully avenged. The event caused a decisive rupture in the popular party. Barnave and the Lameths had now attained that degree of superiority which prepared them to side with power, and to deprecate violence of speech or action. They joined, therefore, in a coalition with Lafayette, and even with Malouet and the remains of Necker's party. Seceding from the Jacobin Club, they founded one in opposition, called the Feuillant, by means of which they sought to consolidate their influence. They were also in intimate correspondence with the king, especially Barnave, whom Louis consulted on every step he took. Thus in the ascendant, it was natural they should recoil from the extreme opinions they had hitherto professed, and be disposed to reconsider a constitution which reduced the executive power within such narrow limits. A committee had been already appointed to revise the constitutional decrees, which had been passed in no settled form, and to embody them in one act or digest. Through it modifications might be proposed, but there were serious difficulties in the way of their adoption. In the first place, Barnave, the Lameths, and Duport, durst not venture to risk their popularity too far; and secondly, the royalists and the republicans were equally averse to any improvements that might give a promise of stability to the constitution, for both looked to its speedy overthrow in different senses. Under these circumstances, it was arranged that

* Scarcely any event in the Revolution is so variously related as this affair of the Champ de Mars. No two authorities agree, and it is difficult for the historian to gather the truth from the distorted and contradictory statements on either side. The records of the National Assembly differ from those of the Commune, and the newspapers of the day give conflicting accounts. In the *claircissements historiques* appended to the first volume of Madame Roland's Memoirs, sundry original papers are found throwing light on the subject, and also in the like appendix to Bailly, vol. i.

the suggestions of alteration should not come from the committee of revisal, but that Malouet should arraign its report, and condemn such of the provisions as most closely trenched on the royal prerogative, when Barnave was to answer him with an indignant refutation as to many of his objections, but allow that some of them were well-founded, and indeed so self-evident, that it was always intended to obviate them. But this stratagem failed, through the perverseness of the *Coté-Droit*.* The 290 members who had signed the declaration to take no part in the proceedings of the Assembly, refused to forego this determination, and the modifications could not be carried without the aid of their votes. It was necessary, accordingly, to abandon the project, and let the constitution be ratified with all its imperfections. When, therefore, Malouet made his purposed speech, he was assailed with cries of *Order*, and compelled to descend from the tribune, on the ground that it was not competent for any member to dispute the wisdom of the constitutional articles. Some of minor significance, nevertheless, were altered, and the month of August was almost wholly consumed in debates on questions connected with the constitution.

One of the most important of these occurred on the manner in which the constitution, when once finally decreed, might be hereafter altered. In the solution of this problem, the Assembly evinced a high sense of its own fitness and sagacity, by deciding, that although the nation had an inalienable right to change its constitution, such right should not be exercised until after three successive legislatures had agreed in proposing alterations, the propriety of adopting which was to be determined by an assembly of revision, composed of the fourth legislature, and 249 additional members specially delegated for that object. As each legislature was to be elected for two years, this provision tied the nation to the constitution for at least six years, whatever faults or vices it might be found to have when put to the test of practice. The idea was preposterous of thus binding the future, especially in an era of innovations; but it shows the settled conviction of its authors, that they had produced a work so regenerative, and so capitally efficient, that it ought to be fenced by guarantees against sudden changes before it had at least been secured a fair trial. They might also plead, in justification of such apparent presumption, several precedents of similar immutability weaved into the laws of nations both ancient and modern. Malouet exposed the inconsistency and inutility of such a restriction, but his observations passed unheeded. The mode of presenting the constitutional

* The circumstances attending this singular affair are related by Bertrand de Molleville in his *Annals*, vol. iv. p. 299; and also in a letter from the Count de Gouvernet, dated the 26th August 1791, to Bouillé, inserted in the memoirs of the latter, p. 282.

act for the acceptance of the king also occasioned a warm discussion. The question was, whether he should give a simple and pure acceptation, or be allowed to exercise a discretion as to the whole or any part. It was clear that if he had no freedom of option in the earlier stages of the Revolution, he could scarcely hope to enjoy any now. Still, the subject was debated with an earnestness as great as if it were really of vital interest. In truth, the constitutionalists wished, for its effect both on foreign powers and on domestic parties, that the sanction of Louis XVI. should appear to be given voluntarily, and free from all constraint; with which view they proposed that he should be set completely at liberty, and invited to go wherever he chose, to ponder at leisure the constitutional act, and embrace it, or not, according to his real conviction. Robespierre was indifferent to this consequence. He thought Louis ought to be very grateful for being appointed king at all, since he deemed his title rested on this very statute of the constitution. In plain words, he said the question for his consideration was—‘Here the French nation offers you the first throne in the world; will you accept it or not? Do you choose to be king of the French, as we incline to nominate you?’ He concluded, therefore, that the pretence of bidding him go at large to make up his mind was sheerly absurd. The Assembly, nevertheless, decreed that Louis should be liberated from every semblance of restraint; be requested to appoint his own guards; and if, after due deliberation, he yielded to the desire of the nation, be intreated to prescribe the ceremony of giving his solemn adhesion to the constitution, and inviolable engagement to uphold it.

On Saturday the 3d of September, the great charter of French liberty was for the last time read aloud in the Assembly, and a deputation of sixty members appointed to bear it to the king. Upon receiving it, Louis intimated his intention to remain in Paris, and continue the services of the National Guards about his person. The palace and garden of the Tuileries were immediately thrown open, and the king again ostensibly rendered master of his movements. On the following day, the galleries leading to the royal chapel were early filled by sympathising partisans, who, when the king and queen appeared, saluted them with enthusiastic cries of *Vive le roi! Vive la reine!* Frequently, during divine service, such expressions of loyalty and attachment were heard bursting irrepressibly forth, and jarring the strains of the sacred music. Such proofs of zeal and sympathy in his distress were doubtless consolatory to the heart of the king; and he had need of encouragement in this trying moment of his fate. He was plunged in the most cruel perplexity. His conscience and his reason both revolted at the constitution, yet he must needs accept it; and not only accept it, but feign a satisfaction—assume

the mask of gladness, to disguise his true aversion. Montmorin and Malouet urged him to take courage, and refuse his assent to several articles of the charter; Barnave and the Lameths besought him to give an unqualified consent to the whole; and in this opinion letters from the emperor seconded them. After a decent interval of hesitation, for it could scarcely be called deliberation, Louis resigned himself to enact the pageant imposed upon him. On the 13th of September he wrote a letter to the president of the Assembly, intimating that he 'accepted the constitution, and engaged to maintain it at home, defend it from all attacks abroad, and cause it to be executed by all the means it placed in his power;' and that, as he deemed his solemn acceptance should be given in the place where the constitution itself had been matured, he would attend in the Assembly the following day at noon. Reiterated plaudits accompanied this announcement, and Lafayette hastened to take advantage of the general exultation. He moved that all persons in custody on account of the king's departure should be set at liberty; that all proceedings instituted with reference to the events of the Revolution should be stayed; and that the use of passports should be abandoned, leaving locomotion free in and out of the kingdom. His proposition was adopted by acclamation, and a deputation named to wait upon the king and thank him for his letter. To this deputation Louis replied in touching terms; and pointing to the queen, who entered the apartment with her son and daughter, said, 'My wife and children are here, and they partake my sentiments.' The queen advanced, and gave a personal assurance of the cordiality with which she shared the constitutional principles of her consort. The members of the deputation retired, enchanted with the benignity of the royal declarations.

It was debated in the Assembly after what fashion the king should be received. It seemed fitting that the ceremonial should indicate the altered relations of the executive and the constituent power; wherefore these legislators resolved, that it became their dignity to retain their seats and hats whilst the king stood uncovered before them. A chair was placed for him on the left of the president's, both being covered in the same manner with velvet and fleurs-de-lis. The king entered, shorn of every decoration save the Cross of St Louis, the Assembly having only the day before abrogated all other orders. He placed himself in the chair allotted for him, and then rising, spoke briefly thus:—

'Gentlemen, I have come solemnly to consecrate my acceptance of the constitutional act. I swear, in consequence, to be faithful to the nation and to the law, to employ all the power delegated to me in maintaining the constitution decreed by the Constituent National Assembly, and to cause the laws to be executed. I pray that this great and memorable epoch be a har-

binge of the re-establishment of tranquillity and union, and that it become the pledge of the happiness of the people, and the prosperity of the empire.'

When he resumed his seat, the hall resounded with applause for several minutes. The president, Thouret, replied in an oration, wherein he extolled the people of France and the National Assembly for the virtue and fortitude with which they had vindicated the cause of liberty, and congratulated Louis XVI. upon being chosen by so great a nation to be its monarch. Fresh acclamations rang—the Assembly broke up—and the members crowding round the king, escorted him in triumph to the palace.* Universal joy prevailed; Paris was illuminated for two successive nights; the theatres and places of amusement were thrown open to the public; Louis and the queen took part in the enjoyments, and appeared at the Opera and the Theatre-Français amid the cheers of the audiences. All auguries were auspicious at this happy time of national entrancement: the clouds of doubt were dispelled; the hopes of the most sanguine were realised; and France was glorious, regenerated, and free.

The mission of the National Assembly was fulfilled, and it had nothing left but to die with dignity. The elections under the new constitution had been ordered to take place between the 25th of August and the 5th of September, and the deputies of the new legislature began to arrive at Paris. The opening of the session was fixed for the 1st of October. Through an imprudent disinterestedness, the Assembly had proscribed its own members from being eligible to be elected, and the destinies of France were consequently about to be intrusted to a perfectly new race of men, chosen during the fever of democratic excitement caused by the flight and suspension of the king. Before the day of its dissolution, nevertheless, the Assembly performed an important act of sovereignty. A territory in the very heart of France, comprehending the districts of Avignon and the Comtat-Venaissin, had been long ago ceded to the Pope, and was governed under his authority. Since the commencement of the Revolution, it had

* How much this effort cost the king, may be judged from the following anecdote, related by Madame Campan:—"The queen had been present at this sitting in a private box. On her return, I had remarked her absolute silence, and her profoundly mournful expression. The king came into her apartment through the interior of the palace; he was very pale, and his features greatly altered; the queen uttered a cry of astonishment at seeing him thus. I thought he was ill; but what was my grief when I heard this unfortunate monarch exclaim, as he threw himself into a chair, and covered his eyes with a handkerchief: "All is lost! Ah, madame, and you have been a witness of this humiliating scene! Alas! have you come to France to see"—His words were choked by sobs; the queen threw herself on her knees before him, and pressed him in her arms. I remained, not from any blameable curiosity, but through a stupor which rendered me incapable of judging what I ought to do. The queen said to me, "Oh, go, go!" in a tone which seemed to express: "Don't remain a spectator of the prostration and despair of your sovereign."—*Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 167.

been the theatre of savage warfare between the different parties into which its inhabitants were divided. The *patriots* and the *papalists* alternately gained the upper hand, and terrible atrocities marked their respective triumphs. In one night the former massacred sixty-three persons in the prison of Avignon, among whom were thirteen women, in revenge for the murder of one of their leaders in the church of the Cordeliers. It was necessary, for the peace of the country, that an end should be put to these troubles, and the easiest mode of so doing was to incorporate the territory in that of France. The majority of the inhabitants undoubtedly desired this amalgamation; for they claimed to be French, and had several times petitioned to be acknowledged as such; but the Assembly had hitherto refrained from acceding to their importunities. It now, however, deemed the time come for taking this step; and it decreed that henceforth Avignon and the Comtat belonged to France, promising the Pope an indemnity for his loss. On the 30th of September, the last sitting was held. The king again attended, and delivered a speech replete with benevolent sentiments and judicious exhortations. The president responded in a pompous harangue; at the end of which, turning to the galleries, he cried in a loud tone, 'The Constituent Assembly declares that its task is accomplished, and that it now ceases to exist.'

Thus closed this famous Assembly, which had operated so prodigious a change in the monarchy of France in the course of two years. Actuated from the first by a pure desire to establish liberty on a firm and secure basis, it had been driven, by the very attempts made to thwart it, far beyond what was necessary to attain that object. Long threatened by the power of the crown, and in constant dread of it, in its latter days it had to contend against the popular passions it had itself contributed to arouse and foster. Such is the invariable course of a great revolutionary movement. Enlightened and moderate men are first in the van, but they are not heard, because they wield the weapon of reason only; they must appeal to stronger motives, and intimidate or coerce. To do so where appropriate institutions are wanting, material force is requisite; and these philosophic innovators must make common cause with demagogues to incite the masses. When these allies begin to conquer, they also begin to quarrel: the first are content with temperate success, and would pause; the latter are only the more eager for fresh spoils, and assail with increased energy. From friends, they become enemies; eventual moderation is a greater crime than the primary resistance; and popular wrath is more bitter against what are deemed deserters than against open foes. And these so-called deserters are powerless: repudiated by their early antagonists, who enjoy and insult their distress, they have lost the dangerous support they had been

moved to invoke; and have no option but to proceed with the onward march, or be trodden under foot. This result had been already strikingly exemplified in the French Revolution, and many of the ardent reformers of 1789 were hopeless exiles in 1791.

The emigrants at Coblenz were, nevertheless, in high spirits at this period. Although the Emperor Leopold had taken no steps to put in execution the agreement concerted with the Count d'Artois at Mantua, he had, in August, held a meeting with the king of Prussia at Pilnitz, and, in conjunction with that monarch, issued a declaration of sympathy with the king of France, and offering to concur with other powers in an armed interference on his behalf. This, it must be confessed, fell far short of the expectations formed by the Count d'Artois and Bouillé, who were both present at this interview of the great German potentates; but still they had hopes of deriving considerable advantages from it. The emperor was less inclined than the king of Prussia for a hostile demonstration, since he entertained a greater dread of the resistance the people of France could make to an invasion. The emigrants scouted the idea of any such resistance, and maintained that the enterprise would be simply a march to Paris: nor did this confidence seem altogether misplaced at the time. Bouillé was well aware how utterly disorganised the French army was; and now that nearly all the officers had emigrated, he viewed it as a mere undisciplined rabble. The king of Prussia inherited from his great predecessor what he and others thought the finest army in the world, and he was elated with the prospect of employing it, as he had but recently done in Holland, to crush audacious rebels, and possibly to win for his crown some coveted acquisitions. A vast scheme of ambition opened upon his imagination. The principal object of the conferences at Pilnitz was to plan a second robbery of Poland, and he had secured for himself a very fair share of the plunder; a few provinces more on the south and west would form an acceptable addition. Frederick William, therefore, was fully bent on carrying the declaration out to its expressed intent; whilst Leopold, more pacific in his temperament, wavered, and shrank from committing himself to the dangers of a war. He thought, at least, that the resources of negotiation should be exhausted before that desperate alternative was embraced. Another sovereign, at the same time, burned to draw the sword against constitutional France, whom these confederated spoliators looked upon as a madman, and refused to hearken to his proposals. This was Gustavus III. of Sweden; a prince who, though very far from being positively insane, was possessed with the vagaries of a knight-errant of old. He had pledged his vows to Marie-Antoinette, whom he had idolised in the meridian of her beauty, and he panted to do battle

as her champion. Catherine of Russia, wily and prescient, nurtured his enthusiasm, and promised him an auxiliary force of 18,000 Muscovites to aid in a descent on the coast of France. She was also very urgent with Austria and Prussia to take up arms; for she foresaw the convenience to herself of engaging all her neighbours in a distant war, whilst she was left at liberty to pursue her own measures with Poland and Turkey. She was lavish, consequently, in her promises of contributions of men and money, but entertained no intention of fulfilling them. Assuredly, she had no serious purpose of joining in the quixotic enterprise of Gustavus, yet she appeared very eager in the cause, and prevailed on Spain, then mistress of some disposable wealth from her transatlantic mines, to undertake to furnish a subsidy for the equipment of his fleet and army. In the spring, therefore, he was prepared to leave his kingdom, and, like another Rollo, seek his fortunes on the shores of Normandy; whilst, peradventure, his ally, Catherine, appropriated Finland, on which she had her eye, and so anticipated her grandson in the seizure of that extensive province. But his destiny was differently ruled. He had humbled the nobility of Sweden by a species of revolution to the profit of royalty, and they plotted to take his life. He was assassinated at Stockholm on the 16th March 1792.

England was the only power of any weight in Europe which held wholly aloof from the proposed combination against the French Revolution. Pitt, her prime minister, wisely judged that he had no reason to interfere in the domestic concerns of another country; whilst the British people generally—themselves in the enjoyment of a constitutional liberty—sympathised with the French in their efforts to establish a free form of government. They overlooked the excesses which sometimes stained these efforts, regarding them as inseparable from a popular rising against despotism, incidental only to a first delirium, and soon to terminate in a settled system of order. Such was the light in which both the government and the people of England were disposed to regard the Revolution; and it was not until subsequent atrocities alienated and shocked opinion, that it became a subject of alarm and horror in that country. Thus at the period of the acceptance by Louis XVI. of the constitution, no foreign power was actually in arms to reinstate him in his old authority, nor had any, except Russia and Sweden, even withdrawn their ambassadors from Paris. Yet did the emigrants indulge in the most senseless bravadoes. Their ranks were continually swelled by fresh recruits from France, for the mania of emigration was spreading wider and wider; and they mustered on the banks of the Rhine a force of from 12,000 to 15,000 men, chiefly cavalry. They openly proclaimed that the king's acceptance was wrung by compulsion; that no credit was due to it; and that he was, in fact, dethroned; conse-

quently, the Count de Provence claimed to exercise the functions of regent with regard to foreign powers. It was dangerous for Louis to communicate with his brothers; yet he contrived to do so from time to time; and he earnestly conjured them to remain quiescent, as any hostile attempt on their part would only render his situation more perilous. It was with some difficulty he persuaded them to forego a scheme for getting possession of Strasburg, which he happily learnt in time to prevent its realisation. He even exhorted the emperor to prohibit the emigrants from collecting in arms on the German frontier, which that monarch, in his wish to avert a war if possible, actually did, but without any effect.* They disregarded his orders, as well as those of the Electors of Treves and Mayence, in whose territories they had chiefly settled, and to whom they caused infinite trouble and annoyance.

The new Legislative Assembly met on the 1st of October. Its composition was necessarily more democratic than that of its forerunner and creator. There were no royalists or monarchists within it, but simply defenders of the constitution, and partisans of a republic. The designations of the rival clubs, which had wholly influenced the elections, distinguished also these two parties: the first were called the Feuillans, the latter the Jacobins; and they formed respectively the Côté-Droit and the Côté-Gauche of the Assembly. But as in the Constituent, so in the Legislative Assembly, the Côté-Gauche was divided into two sections, of which the more brilliant and numerous was that of the Girondins. This appellation was derived from its principal members being representatives of the department of La Gironde, men of eminent abilities and acquirements, who contemplated the establishment of a republic as the most rational form of government, but were not disposed to subvert the existing order of things suddenly, much less violently: acting rather as keen observers and stern censors, they awaited the result of the experiment about to be tried, ready to take advantage of errors or circumstances. They included an extraordinary array of talent: Vergniaud, Guadet, Gensonné, Isnard, Condorcet, Brissot, were all endowed with superior faculties calculated for the arena of a popular and deliberative assembly. Vergniaud, above all, was the most accomplished orator produced by the Revolution. The other section of the Côté-Gauche was more extreme in its tendencies, and was led by Chabot, Bazire, Merlin, and Couthon, all violent democrats.

* Bouillé says that the king being informed of the project against Strasburg, 'employed orders, and even intreaties, to stop the emigrants from executing it, or from taking any act of hostility. For this purpose he sent to the princes his brothers the Baron de Viomenil and the Chevalier de Coigny, who communicated to them in his name his disapproval of the arming of the French nobility, to which the emperor opposed all possible obstacles, but which continued in spite of him.'—*Memoirs*, p. 316.

The leaders of the constitutionalists were Vaublanc, Dumas, and Ramond, who, besides being inferior in talents to their opponents, laboured under the disadvantage of having to uphold a work in the force and virtue of which they had themselves but little faith, and which was an object of sarcasm to both republican and royalist. Nevertheless, at the first moment of convocation, the Assembly professed a profound respect for the constitution; it was borne in solemn procession into the hall, and deposited upon the table: the whole of the members stood up, and took the oath prescribed by it—'to live free, or die'—and afterwards they swore individually to maintain it as decreed by the Constituent Assembly, and to suffer no infringement of it. But they manifested their real spirit by the very first act after the election of a president and secretaries. This was to brush away the last remnant of what was called feudality, which had been spared by the Constituent—the titles of *sire* and *majesty* left to the king. These they abolished; but repenting such precipitate hostility towards Louis XVI., who took the indignity in high dudgeon, and declared, in consequence, that he would not open the session in person, they next day revoked the decree, and the king repaired to the Assembly on the 7th. He was received very favourably, and delivered a speech which provoked great applause. He exhorted the deputies to apply themselves with earnestness in the adoption of measures to restore public tranquillity, consolidate order in the finances, impart force to the laws, and guarantee security to property. He informed them that he had notified his acceptance of the constitution to foreign powers, and that he relied confidently upon the continuance of amicable relations with them. He concluded by impressing upon them the necessity of harmony and union between the executive and legislative powers, to insure the success and stability of the constitution.

There is no doubt Louis was perfectly sincere at this juncture in wishing to give full efficacy to the constitution, and faithfully test its practicability. He had, indeed, no other alternative, for it was the only shield of protection that remained to him. By causing it to be respected, he at least secured himself on the throne, and however irksome his changed position might be, he could console himself with the hope of amelioration. Opinion might take a favourable turn, and he be reinstated in a fair share of authority through a spontaneous reaction.* This was the cherished aspi-

* Louis expressed his sentiments very frankly to Bertrand de Molleville upon his appointment to the ministry of marine. "I do not regard," he said, "this constitution as a master-piece—very far from it; I am of opinion that it has very great defects, and that if I had been at liberty to make observations upon it, advantageous reforms might have been introduced. But now it is too late; I have sworn to accept it such as it is; I must, and will, keep my oath—the more so that I believe the strictest execution of the constitution is the surest means of making known to the nation and convincing it of the changes that ought to

ration of his heart, for the idea of owing his restoration either to the emigrants or to foreign powers was painful and abhorrent to him. Nevertheless, however genuine his own intentions, he was still controlled by fatal advisers, who led him continually astray; and, moreover, a combination of untoward circumstances almost inextricably entangled his situation. The want of foresight in the constitutionalists recoiled disastrously upon him. Their vain parade of disinterestedness in the self-denying ordinance as to re-election, had filled the new legislature with enemies and republicans, and instead of conceiving a just alarm, with the same blind folly they now abandoned the civil and military command of Paris. Bailly and Lafayette both thought fit to resign their posts, on the ground that, as the constitution was completed, their several missions were fulfilled. The command of the National Guards was confided to six legionary chiefs, who exercised it in rotation; the appointment of a new mayor was vested in the sections of Paris. The constitutionalists proposed Lafayette as a candidate; the republicans started Pétion. Through an infatuation which is scarcely credible, the court favoured the latter; and not only favoured him, but supported him by a considerable outlay of money. This was the result of the intense hatred indulged by the queen against Lafayette, and of her passion to retaliate upon those she considered the authors of all the calamities that had befallen the throne. Pétion carried the election by a large majority; and bitter cause had she, in her future hours of sorrowful rumination, to bewail his success.*

be made in it. I have, or can have, no other plan but this, from which I will assuredly not deviate, and I expect my ministers will conform to it." Bertrand asked if the opinion of the queen was conformable to his. "Quite so," the king replied; "she will tell you so herself." He then proceeded to see the queen, who thus addressed him: "The king has made known to you his intentions relative to the constitution; do you not think that the only plan to follow is for him to be faithful to his oath?" "Yes, certainly, madame," he answered. "Well, then, be assured," she said, "we shall adhere to it. Let us take courage, M. Bertrand; I hope that, with patience, firmness and perseverance, all is not yet lost."—*Bertrand's Private Memoirs*, vol. i. p. 214; English edition.

* "The court itself, detesting M. de Lafayette, and fearing, above all, his ambition and intrigues, openly favoured Pétion. "M. de Lafayette," said the queen to me on this occasion, "only desires to be mayor of Paris, with the view of being soon after *mayor of the palace*. Pétion is a Jacobin and a republican, but he is a fool, incapable of ever being the leader of a party. He will be a nullity of a mayor; besides, it is possible that the knowledge of the interest we take in his election may bring him over to the king."—*Bertrand's Annals*, vol. v. p. 106.

Madame Campan, a good authority on such a subject, thus paints the feelings of the court at this period. "The spirit of the aristocratic party tended to prefer the worst, even the Jacobins, to the establishment of the constitutional laws: and it was apprehended that an acceptance bearing any other character than that of constraint would be a veritable sanction, capable of maintaining the new government. Disorders the most terrible appeared preferable, because they supported the hope of a total change; and when those not in the secret of the court testified the terror inspired by the popular societies, the initiated replied that a sincere royalist ought to cherish the Jacobins."—Vol. ii. pp. 163-4.

The clubs kept Paris and all France in constant turmoil. The Jacobin Club was rapidly gaining a preponderance which threatened the existence of every other power in the State. The Girondins belonged to it, but their cultivated minds were not adapted for so demagogical a theatre; they could not stoop to flatter the mob, nor could they suit their language to its tastes. The man who swayed this club, and exercised despotic authority in it, was one of the most revolting characters in history—Maximilian Robespierre. Against talents, virtues, valour, this personage prevailed by dint of an envious implacable cynicism, which detracted from all merit, preserved him from the touch of sympathy, and corresponded to the latent instincts of the multitude—filled with suspicions, and harbouring animosity against superiority of every kind, whether in grade or in attainments. Thus he ruled alone, repelling all participators, doubtless with an admirable tact, derived from the very malignity of his disposition: ever cool and collected, ever hardened by unmingled selfishness, he could insinuate doubts, sneer at motives, suggest incredulity, with a success which baffled rivalry, and rendered him the sole idol, pure, trustworthy, and incorruptible. Yet his style of oratory was neither flowing nor animated; his person was mean, and his countenance forbidding; and he lacked personal courage, a quality which is generally essential to dazzle the vulgar. Not to intellectual or physical gifts, therefore, can his paramount influence be ascribed; but, in truth, he had the art to impersonate the spirit of the time—that which through the masses was gaining rapid way, and about to overmaster the whole nation. He had an associate in Danton, who was of a character almost diametrically opposite to his own. Danton directed the Club of the Cordeliers, an offshoot of the Jacobins. He was in the vigour of manhood, tall and commanding in figure, stentorian in voice, strenuous in action, undaunted in purpose, unscrupulous, venal,* yet open, and not insensible to emotions of generosity. It was not with personal rancour that his mind was armed; with the ferocity of the tiger against those he deemed public enemies, he was apathetic to private jealousies and antipathies, and apt to grow sluggish when not stimulated by excitement, which eventually occasioned his ruin. Such were the two persons who, in their several spheres, now agitated opinion, moulded a material force, and prepared the way for the coming government of the populace.

This was perhaps simply a question of time, but it owed a more swift acceleration to the measures taken to avert it. From the

* There is no doubt that Danton, together with many other patriots and demagogues, received money from the court, which generally bribed to little purpose. Weber says that Montmorin showed a receipt for 100,000 livres (£4000) signed by Danton.—Vol. ii. p. 71. In the introduction to Rabant St Etienne's History of the Legislative Assembly, Danton is accused of having been in the pay of both the court and the Duke of Orleans.—Vol. i. p. 195.

era of the king's flight, a conspiracy was formed to dethrone him; not secretly, or under the cover of obscurity, but openly, and in the light of day. The scheme was hatched, and the operations defined, in popular conclaves, whose debates and resolutions were proclaimed to the world. Yet to gaze at the darkening clouds, and pray they might dissolve without bursting in a storm, was all Louis XVI. could do. He was wholly at the mercy of circumstances; and these, through the agency of friends and foes alike, proved as adverse as they might well be. The Legislative Assembly commenced its assaults by penal enactments against the emigrants and nonjuring priests. It is certain that the conduct of both was fitted to exasperate it: the first by their threats and armed musters on the frontiers, the latter by their machinations to foment religious discord. The king's brothers, moreover, had published a solemn protest against the acceptance of the constitution by him, declaring it null and void, not only on account of the duress he was under, but also of his incompetency to relinquish the rights of the crown. Hence it was decreed that all Frenchmen assembled in arms out of the kingdom, and who should so remain assembled after the 1st of January next, should be deemed guilty of conspiracy against the nation, and incur the penalties of confiscation and death. A like sentence was awarded against the princes, civil functionaries, naval and military officers, who remained out of France on that day. With regard to the nonjuring clergy, it was decreed that, unless within a certain time they took the civic oath, they should forfeit the salaries continued to them by the constitution, be considered as *suspected* of rebellion against the law, and of evil designs against their country, be subject to the surveillance of the authorities, and be liable to imprisonment for one or two years in the event of disturbances occurring within their localities bearing a religious character. The ministers of Louis XVI. (who had been partially altered by the retirement of Montmorin, Duportail, and Thevenard, and the translation of Delessart to the foreign, the appointment of Narbonne to the war, Cahier de Gerville to the home, and Bertrand de Molleville to the marine department, of whom the latter alone was a decided royalist) all concurred in advising him to reject these two decrees. Barnave and the Lameths, who also assisted in the councils of the king, agreed in recommending the same course; for they held it expedient to bridle the Assembly, and not permit it to transgress the principles of the constitution. But they suggested at the same time that, to gain popularity, and obviate the consequences of this rejection, the king should appoint constitutional priests to the royal chapel; which he would by no means consent to do. 'No, no,' said he; 'I beg you will not press me on that point: since liberty of worship is made general, surely I ought to enjoy it as well as others.' He, however, adopted the

advice of refusing his assent to the decrees, taking the precaution simply to sanction one of the provisions, whereby his eldest brother was held to forfeit his right of reversion to the crown, unless he returned within two months. He also published a proclamation addressed to the emigrants, admonishing them to cease their treasonable practices, and re-enter the kingdom; and wrote letters to all the absent princes, recalling them to a sense of their duty towards himself and the country. The ministers attended the Assembly in a body to present the decrees with the royal veto attached—*‘the king will examine it;’* such being the constitutional phrase. Duport de Tertre, keeper of the seals, would have explained the motives of the king’s refusal, but his agitation was so great, that he began to falter in his articulation, and the Assembly raised such a howl of displeasure, that he was fain to desist, and hurry with his colleagues out of the hall.*

Thus the king, backed by the constitutionalists, set himself in hostility against the Assembly; but neither by temperament nor by position was he competent to sustain the warfare with vigour or effect. At the next attack he manifested the weakness of the resistance he could oppose. The Jacobins were vehement in their denunciation of a prerogative which, as they complained, allowed the will of one man to control that of 24,000,000; and numerous addresses were presented to the Assembly, urging it to assume a firm attitude towards the executive power. It did not need to be prompted. Upon the strength of well-accredited reports, it resolved that the king should be called upon to remonstrate with the Electors of Treves and Mayence for permitting levies of men in their dominions, and to apprise them that, unless they put an end to them by the 15th of January, they would be regarded as enemies of France. Upon presenting this resolution to the king, Vaublanc, who was at the head of the deputation, accompanied it by a harangue, in the course of which he said, ‘Had the French who were driven from their country by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes assembled in arms upon the frontiers, and had they been protected by the princes of Germany, we ask you, sire, what would have been the conduct of Louis XIV.? What he would have done for his authority, may your majesty do for the safety of the Empire and the maintenance of the constitution!’ To this appeal Louis replied that he would take the subject into his serious deliberation. There was nothing

* On the 12th November, all the ministers met at the house of the keeper of the seals, that they might go together to the Assembly. Before we set out, he called for and drank two large glasses of water. I was afraid he was ill; but on mentioning my apprehension, he answered, “No; it is only a precaution I take every time I go to the Assembly. The blood boils in my veins when I hear these fellows speak; and if I did not take something to cool myself, I should get into a passion, and be apt to tell them very disagreeable things.”—*Bertrand*, vol. v. p. 86. The precaution failed in this instance to insure coolness.

he so much dreaded as a war; for whether successful or unsuccessful, his miseries were sure to be aggravated, and he took a long time for reflection. In the interim, the wrath of the Assembly was discharged against his ministers, who were continually called before it, interrogated, censured, and warned that 'responsibility meant death.' The newspapers launched forth furious invectives, and gave currency to alarming reports of a speedy invasion by an army of 200,000 men, and of the king's intention to join the emigrants. These reports threw Paris into a violent commotion; the Assembly was besieged by deputations from the sections, exhorting it to save the country from its enemies, foreign and domestic; the hall of the Jacobins rang with patriotic tirades against tyrants and despots; everywhere a passion for vengeance was aroused, wild and blind, inflamed at once by apprehensions of danger and suspicions of treachery. The Assembly appointed a committee of inquiry, with extensive powers of arrest and inquisition; and so strongly was the fear of the king's departure impressed, that countersigns were given to the sentinels at the Tuileries, by one of whom he was stopped in coming out of his apartments one evening about nine o'clock. In this state of things, Louis followed a precedent he had himself set, and which had been generally successful in calming the acerbity of the representatives of the nation for at least a time. This was to go in person to the Assembly, which he did on the afternoon of the 14th December. He entered cordially into the sentiments of the Assembly, and whilst deprecating the scourge of war, avowed his determination not to suffer the safety or honour of France to be compromised. From the Emperor of Germany he expected the co-operation of a zealous ally, but he would give notice to the Electors of Treves and Cologne to dissipate the musters in their territories, and, anticipating the event of their refusal, he would make the requisite military preparations to enforce compliance. These declarations were warmly cheered, and Louis once more returned to the Tuileries comforted by applauses and benedictions.

Narbonne, the new minister at war, was a young man of approved patriotism, and he enjoyed a popularity which his colleagues were far from sharing. He was eager to distinguish himself, and set about the task of organising a military force on the frontier with ardour and indefatigability. He announced to the Assembly, amidst its marked approbation, that he was charged by the king to assemble a force of 150,000 men, to be divided into three armies, commanded respectively by Rochambeau, Luckner, and Lafayette, and that he was about to proceed in person to superintend the preparations for defence. The two first of these generals were veterans of the seven years' war; the last had won laurels on the field of Brandywine, and could boast

the eulogy of Washington. In their fidelity and ability the utmost confidence was placed, and the outbreak of a war was looked forward to rather with avidity than with distaste. It at once became the question of the moment, to the exclusion almost of all others. The Girondins were the chief advocates of war; for, regarding the hostile intentions of the continental courts as sufficiently proved, and holding that they only waited until their plans for a combined attack were matured, they considered that France should compel them to declare themselves, both from the uneasiness caused by their equivocal conduct, and from the secret plotting they suspected between them and the court. They likewise made light of the resources possessed by these powers for aggressive warfare, and doubted not the capacity of France to resist them. They deemed it incumbent, therefore, to take, not indeed the initiative in hostilities, but the most decided steps towards all the courts, according to the dispositions they had manifested—to withdraw the French ambassadors from St Petersburg, Stockholm, and Madrid; to insist upon the emperor adhering to the treaty of 1756, by which he was bound not to maintain a larger force than 30,000 men in Belgium; to enforce the disbanding of the emigrant musters; and to outlaw the exiled princes. Robespierre, on the other hand, pleaded the cause of peace; for he feared, in his timidity, the consequences of war, and, in his envy, the success of rivals. Danton held the same language in support of his confederates, and probably accepted a largess from the court for doing what he would have done without it. The constitutionalists also were in favour of peace; that is to say, in conjunction with the moderate royalists, they contemplated a congress of the European powers, in which the principles and form of the French government should be regulated by a species of compromise between royalty and democracy. They naturally inclined to counter-revolutionary ideas, from the state of nullity to which they were reduced by the preponderance of the Girondins; and they were content to have their constitution remodelled abroad, since no chance remained of amending it at home. In truth, this was the only way in which a peaceable termination could have been given to the Revolution; but at the time, such a solution was quite impracticable, and became feasible only after a conflict waged for a quarter of a century.

War, then, was inevitable. All the chief States in Europe, except Great Britain, were subject to an absolute monarchy; and the erection of a democratic government in its very heart, among the most powerful of its communities, was viewed with the deepest alarm and abhorrence. There was, first, the danger of the contagion spreading, and infecting other populations, to the detriment of thrones; and secondly, the humiliation of Louis XVI. was felt as insulting to the majesty of kings in general. There-

fore not a doubt was entertained by any crowned head that it behoved all monarchs to coalesce and interfere in the internal troubles of France, both to stop the progress of the Revolution, and to vindicate the authority and dignity of her outraged sovereign. This was esteemed a bounden duty; and considerations of policy in the various cabinets had alone prevented its more prompt fulfilment. But the obligation had been distinctly affirmed, and in the declaration of Pilnitz it was openly proclaimed. Consequently, the French were left in no doubt as to the intentions harboured against them, which were, moreover, testified by indications of an unmistakeable character. They, consistently with the fundamental principles they had espoused, resented this presumption of others to dictate how they were to be ruled; and the simple question with them was, whether they should wait to be attacked, or anticipate the onslaught by being themselves the aggressors. The passion of combativeness is inherent in the whole human race; and of all nations redeemed from barbarism, it has ever glowed with the greatest fervour among the French. As among the old Romans, so to them virtue is identical with valour. Sensitive, proud, and martial, they were the last people on earth to quail before intimidation; and with the additional incentive of a newly-conquered liberty to defend, it is not surprising they were readily animated to unsheath the sword, and fling defiance in the teeth of their threatening enemies.

Louis XVI. was in the most critical paroxysm of his long agony. Obligated to profess a hearty co-operation with the Assembly in measures which led inevitably to war, he resorted to expedients of every kind to avert the catastrophe. He kept up a constant correspondence with the emigrants and the emperor, and besought them at least to temporise—a policy in which Leopold, from his pacific tendencies, was well disposed to concur. In the meantime, great efforts were made to operate upon opinion in France itself. The Feuillant Club was strengthened by a large infusion of royalists, and money profusely scattered to gain proselytes. At the instigation of Bertrand de Molleville, a plan was organised for packing the galleries of the Assembly, which was acted upon to some extent with signal success.* The same minister formed a scheme of coalition in concert with Delessart and Duport de Tertre, by which the members of the Assembly who were called the *Centre*—not being decided partisans of either side, but fluctuating with the current, and liable to all influences, that of gold not excepted—should, through skilful agency, be bought to take part with the constitutionalists, means being taken to support their union by hired mobs in the galleries, and subsidised

* The curious details of this plan, and the tariff of rewards apportioned to the various grades of *claqueurs*, are given by Bertrand in his *Private Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 153, French edition.

writers in the newspapers. The funds for carrying out this comprehensive project were derived from the civil list, the secret service money, and the surplus cash of the different ministries.* But the scheme failed, through the distrust of the constitutionalists, who hesitated to ally themselves with the court, especially in a compact sullied by such impurity; for little confidence was placed in the sincerity of its conversion to constitutional principles. An incident that occurred tended strongly to fortify this distrust. The Duke of Orleans, who was enrolled of the Jacobins, though somewhat sick of his associates, had renewed his advances for a reconciliation with the king, who granted him an interview, which ended very favourably. On the following Sunday the duke attended the levee at the palace, and was received by the courtiers and royalists—who always congregated on that day in great numbers—with excessive rudeness. They hustled him, trod upon his toes, and fairly shoved him out of the apartment. Some followed him to the top of the staircase with jeers and taunts, and as he descended the steps, leant over the rails and spat upon his head. He issued forth deeply incensed, as he might well be, concluding that the indignity was planned with the connivance of the king; but, in truth, neither the latter nor the queen was privy to the intention, and they both expressed concern at the event. Nevertheless, they probably enjoyed the mortification of their detested kinsman, for they took no steps to soothe his anger or reciprocate his friendly overtures.

Meanwhile, the answers of the Electors and the emperor were received and communicated to the Assembly. They were somewhat contradictory in character. The former promised to disperse the emigrant forces, and prevent enlistments in their principalities: the latter intimated a *conclusum* of the Diet of the Empire, reclaiming the suppressed rights of certain princes possessing imperial fiefs in Alsace and Lorraine, which were guaranteed by treaty; and likewise his own determination to assist the Electors if they were attacked; expressing a hope, however, that the good understanding between the crowns might not be disturbed. This note of the emperor's was regarded as hostile and evasive; and after being referred to the consideration of a committee, it was decreed, on the 25th January 1792, that the king should be requested to declare to the emperor, that if, by the 1st of March next, he failed to give full and entire satisfaction touching his designs, and expressly to renounce all treaties or conventions directed against the sovereignty and independence of the French nation, he would be considered to have declared war. The king had, however, of his own accord answered the despatch; and the

* Bertrand's Annals, second series, vol. v. p. 373, English edition.

result was made known by Delessart on this very 1st of March. The reply of Prince Kaunitz, the Austrian minister, was such as greatly to inflame the Assembly; for it was therein accused of itself invading the constitution accepted by the king, which left to him the initiation of questions of war and peace, and of being controlled by a dangerous faction called the Jacobins, whose principles could not be viewed but with alarm by the powers of Europe. It stated, generally, that those powers were justified in concerting an intervention in the affairs of France, whilst the king was apparently oppressed; but that since his acceptance of the constitution, the case was altered, and the plan of an intervention suspended, until fresh events should render it again necessary. It charged the Jacobins with a wicked design to provoke war, in order to keep France in fermentation, and to establish a republic, which otherwise they had no hopes of effecting; but these schemes, it was expected, would be frustrated by the union with the king of the sound part of the nation, whereby the relations of amity might be preserved. Delessart read his rejoinder to the imperial court, which at the moment satisfied the impatience of the Assembly. In this document he said that the king of the French could not view without pain the existence of a confederacy for which there was no longer any pretence; and requested the emperor to put an end to it by a declaration at once prompt, frank, and categorical. Upon receiving such an assurance, and learning that the military establishments in Belgium and the Brisgau were reduced, he would immediately countermand the preparations in progress on the frontiers of France. Delessart's letter did not reach Vienna until Leopold was dead, whose son Francis, subsequently elected emperor of Germany, sat in his place.

The ministers continued exposed to incessant attacks in the Assembly. Committees had been constituted, corresponding to the different departments of the government, which held in rigid supervision the conduct of the several ministers. These committees made reports at short intervals, in which they almost invariably charged them with neglect of duty, lukewarmness, and even treachery; insomuch that these unfortunate functionaries were almost daily called upon to defend themselves before the Assembly and the angry multitude in the galleries, who hooted them with opprobrious epithets. The composition of the ministry was itself incongruous. Formed chiefly of constitutionalists, it included likewise a Jacobin and a royalist, between whom a difference of opinion was scarcely to be avoided. Narbonne was agreeable to the majority of the Assembly, but not so Bertrand, against whom an inculpatory memorial was addressed to the king. Yet at so critical a moment, Louis was advised to dismiss Narbonne, which failed not to rouse the ire of the Assembly.

The first victim of its indignation was Delessart, who, but a few days before, had been applauded for his energetic reply to Prince Kaunitz. He was now held to have compromised the dignity of the French nation by the language of his communications, and a decree of impeachment was passed against him on sundry charges of a frivolous and unfounded character. He was arrested, and sent off for trial before the National Court, established at Orleans to take cognisance of State crimes. The rest of the ministry, struck with alarm, hastened to tender their resignations. The king saw no resource but to take their successors from the ranks of the victorious party, and surround himself with Jacobin councillors. He accordingly composed his new ministry wholly of Girondins; Degrave first, and then Servan, had the war department, Lacoste the marine, Claviere the finance, Dumouriez the foreign, and Roland the home. Of these the two last were the most remarkable. Dumouriez was an old soldier, who had played a chequered part in the scenes of life, had held important commands, shown considerable talents, and was indifferent to principles so long as they tended to his own advancement. He had previously made overtures to the court, which had been contemptuously rejected; but he possessed boldness, vigour, and capacity sufficient to have done it good service. Roland was an elderly, grave, austere personage, who had passed forty years of his life as an inspector of trade and manufactures at Lyons. He was a man of studious temperament, laborious, and of the simple manners befitting his condition. Of himself he would probably have passed through the world unnoticed, but he chanced to have a wife endowed with superior qualities. Madame Roland was animated with a bold and enthusiastic spirit, which charmed the aspiring minds of the Girondins, and drew them around her as the centre of attraction. Her manners and conversation were engaging, and her intellectual powers effective and brilliant. Her husband yielded implicitly to her sway, and she infused into him the fire of her own soul.

Louis XVI. had been reared not only with lofty notions of the royal prerogative, but also amidst a ceremonious homage partaking of adulation. His person was regarded as almost sacred, nay, was even called so; and access to his presence was guarded with a pomp and formality solemn and overawing. The Constituent Assembly had respected the usages of the court, and in its deputations observed a becoming reverence. The Legislative repudiated this show of deference, and even violated decorum in the multiplicity of the deputations it sent to him; the members of which, often only three or four in number, insisted upon being ushered into the presence with all the honours due to the most important missions, though dressed in the common attire of everyday life. This visitation was particularly offensive to Louis; and

he was so irritated at the combined presumption and contempt displayed, that he complained to the Assembly; whereupon a notable squabble ensued between them, whether these minor deputations were to enter the council-chamber through one wing only of the great folding-door, or have both thrown open to give them admittance. In the end, he had to yield on this, as on all other points; but with his peculiar sensitiveness to etiquette, and with that acute sense of indignity common to fallen greatness, he felt sensibly chagrined. Behold him, then, sitting in council with his Jacobin advisers; Dumouriez fresh from the club where he had worn the red cap of liberty, and cracking familiar jokes; Roland with unclasped shoes and unpowdered hair; all with the air and manners of unpolished plebeians! Roland's appearance, especially, had excited the indignation of the attendants in the palace; the master of the ceremonies took Dumouriez aside, and said to him, pointing to his colleague, 'See, monsieur, he has no buckles to his shoes!' 'Ah! all is lost!' replied Dumouriez, shaking his head gravely.* Even in these trifles the heart of Louis was stricken, and the bitterness of his situation aggravated. Forebodings of danger, too, were ever present to his mind, and his courage fainted under the accumulated pressure. A settled melancholy seized upon him, a gangrene of the mind, which wrought positive stupefaction.†

Francis, the new head of the House of Austria, gave bolder emphasis to the policy of his father with regard to France. On the 18th March, he intimated, through Prince Kaunitz, that he insisted upon the restoration of the dispossessed princes in Alsace, and of Avignon to the Pope, and that the confederation between the powers would be certainly maintained until the faction was suppressed which fomented the disorders of France, menaced the liberty of the king, and set at nought the faith of treaties. These denunciations of the Jacobins, against whom alone Austria affected to take up arms, were singularly indiscreet. They gave rise to the imputation that they were prompted by Louis and the queen, in the belief that they would operate beneficially on opinion, by showing the French that the Jacobins were the sole causes of the

* Madame Roland relates this anecdote with striking effect in her *Memoirs*, vol. i. p. 309.

† Madame Campan draws an affecting portrait of Louis at this period. 'The king fell,' she says, 'into a discouragement which extended to physical prostration. He was for ten days together without uttering a word, even in the bosom of his family, except when at a game of backgammon, which he played with the Princess Elizabeth after dinner, he was obliged to use the words necessary in the game. The queen sought to draw him from this afflicting state, so perilous at a crisis when every minute brought the necessity of acting, by throwing herself at his feet, now suggesting images fitted to alarm him, now lavishing expressions of tenderness. She reminded him, also, of what he owed to his family; and even went so far as to say that if they were to perish, it ought to be with honour, and without waiting to be strangled on the floor of their apartments.'—*Memoirs*, tome ii. p. 203.

war. Hence the idea of an *Austrian committee* sitting at the Tuileries, which furnished demagogues with a staple for declamation, and proved so fatal to the royal family. But if any such purpose were really intended, the device failed as signally as every other planned by the court during the Revolution; for instead of discrediting the Jacobins, this imperial notice and enmity raised them in importance, and identified them in the eyes of the nation with the cause of liberty. Under the impulse of this exaltation, even Robespierre himself was obliged to give way, and the passion for war reigned paramount. Dumouriez sent back an imperative demand for a precise and immediate renunciation of the confederacy, on pain of an instant declaration of war: and the king himself wrote, under his dictation, to the young monarch, assuring him of his firm determination to uphold the constitution which he had freely accepted; and reminding him, amongst other mementos, that the French had sworn to live free, or die, an oath he had himself also taken. But neither Dumouriez's blunt despatch, nor Louis's patriotic declarations, availed to influence the court of Vienna; and Francis coldly replied that he had no other answer to give than that contained in his note of the 18th March. The fatal moment, therefore, had come; Louis could interpose no further obstacles or hesitations, but must yield himself passively to the implacability of his fate. The constitution prescribed that the king should propose, the Assembly decree, war. In accordance with its provisions, he repaired to the Assembly on the 20th April; and after Dumouriez had read, by his command, a long exposition of the wrongs of Leopold and Francis towards France, he arose and formally proposed war against his nephew. The Assembly heard him with pleasure; and that same evening, after a short debate, decreed, as he proposed, war against the king of Hungary and Bohemia.*

On which side rested the blame of provoking this ever-memorable war, is still a subject of contest; but on the balance of equities, a large preponderance is found in the scale of France. She had a right to abolish the feudal system in Lorraine and Alsace, as well as in other parts of her territory; the more especially as she offered indemnities to the fief-holders. She had a right, too, or at least a very excellent pretext, to incorporate Avignon, which had been ceded to the Pope in a season of distress which had ceased, and was a prey to civil war which that

* Louis foreboded all the evil consequences to himself of this war, even to his deposition and trial, and secretly protested against it. Madame Campan relates that she was intrusted with a large portfolio of papers to keep, which the queen told her 'were documents that would be most detrimental to the king if he were put upon his trial.' Adding, 'But it is proper you should know that this portfolio contains the minutes of a privy council in which the king gave his opinion against the war. He caused them to be signed by all the ministers; and in the event of such a trial, he expects this record will be of great use to him.'—*Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 220.

potentate had no means of terminating. At all events, the plunderers of Poland were scarcely the parties to exclaim against such a resumption, when their crime was still fresh and unannealed. But had she a right to plant a democracy on her soil, to curtail the authority of her king, to depose him, imprison him, murder him? She had not yet gone quite so far, but the organs of the domineering party already hinted at the occurrence of such a catastrophe. The law of nations was silent on so difficult a point; at best, it is but an obscure and doubtful authority. It is usually interpreted according to the interests of the moment by intending belligerents, who never fail to find in it reasons to justify projects of ambition or vengeance. The partition of Poland itself had been vindicated by an ingenious train of casuistry. The simple truth was, that the sovereigns of Europe viewed the French Revolution with alarm, and they determined to arrest it by means of intimidation. But instead of being intimidated, the French were exasperated; then the sovereigns began to draw back, and abate their pretensions; the French increased theirs, and insisted that they should absolutely recede, and for ever renounce the idea of interfering with them or their government; this they would not do, and so the French attacked them. If these sovereigns had been a little wiser, they would have left the Revolution to itself; allowed it to exhaust its force, and to subside from the pure lack of aliment. A very strong reaction had already commenced: the middle classes were generally opposed to any farther movement; the first leaders of the Revolution were desirous of allying themselves with the king, and of retrieving for him a larger portion of power. And this might have been accomplished, if he had been permitted to join in such an alliance; but it is incontestably proved by the royalist writers themselves, that at no time, except, perhaps, in the instance of Mirabeau, was the king or queen sincere in affecting to listen to constitutional counsels. They merely temporised, to gain time, hoping in some measure against hope—for they feared the emigrants almost as much as the Jacobins—but resolute against a union based on the principles of constitutional liberty. Yet the existing state of things might have continued to go on until the period for a new election came round, when, beyond all doubt, a moderate Assembly would have been returned. The Jacobins were conscious of this, and they wanted, above all things, some stirring subject of excitement, to keep alive and inflame the passions that must otherwise have cooled. War, therefore, was to them essential for the prosecution of their objects, since there is nothing which operates so powerfully upon a nation as the hazards of war. Successes and reverses alike agitate the people; but when they suspect their own rulers to be in confederacy with the enemy, they become peculiarly sensitive to apprehensions of treachery and danger, under the

influence of which they commit excesses. Without the stimulant of war, it is probable there never would have been a republic in France; nor, without its concomitant provocations, would the horrors and atrocities of the Reign of Terror have been possible.

The commencement of hostilities followed close upon the heels of the declaration of war. The French were divided into three armies—one in Alsace, under Luckner; a second around Metz, called the Army of the Centre, under Lafayette; and a third in Flanders, called the Army of the North, under Rochambeau. As Belgium was known to be dissatisfied with the Austrian rule, it was inferred that that country might be readily overrun. Upon it, accordingly, the first movements were directed. Lafayette being judged the most appropriate, from reputation and talents, to undertake the enterprise, he was ordered to proceed by a forced march from Metz to Givet; which he executed with precision, under a burning sun and across a difficult country, covering fifty-six leagues, in five days. Here he was to begin offensive operations, being seconded by flank evolutions of Rochambeau's army. But he was stopped by the disastrous tidings he received of the failure of those movements. In truth, the armies were in no condition to fight; the old officers had nearly all deserted—the new were unaccustomed to command; the soldiers were insubordinate, and for the most part raw and undisciplined, fresh from the desk, the counter, and the ploughshare. Biron marched from Valenciennes with 10,000 men to capture Mons, and on his way, came in presence of the Austrians. Encamping for the night, two regiments of dragoons mounted their horses, and crying out *We are betrayed!* rode off, carrying Biron with them. The remainder of his corps retreated in disorder, pursued by the Hulan cavalry, which took all the camp equipage. Meanwhile Dillon advanced from Lille to Tournay, in front of which he found an Austrian corps posted to dispute his passage. At the first discharge of musketry his troops gave way, and at length took to flight, abandoning baggage and munitions to the enemy. When recovered from their panic, they accused their general of treachery, and massacred him with shocking barbarity. As cowards are always cruel, they likewise hanged six Tyrolese rangers they had contrived to hurry along with them in scampering across the country. Such were the sad auguries with which the war commenced on the part of France!

The intelligence of these humiliating discomfitures caused a prodigious ferment in Paris. The idea of treachery was eagerly seized upon by the demagogues, and deputations flocked to the bar of the Assembly demanding justice upon traitors. Marat, editor of the 'Friend of the People,' renewed, with frenzy, his counsels of bloodshed. This man, who had practised veterinary surgery, and been attached to the stables of the Count d'Artois,

was the most ferocious monster generated by the Revolution. Long before the general delirium arose, fanned by a multitude of maddening causes, he had preached sedition and murder to the populace. Lafayette had hunted him like a wild beast, for in disposition he was little better; but he had eluded his pursuit, and he was now rising into importance, from the influence his hideous doctrines were acquiring. Robespierre and Danton adopted him into their fraternity, and defended him from the reproaches of the Girondins, who wished to expel him from the Jacobin Club, and adopt measures for silencing him. On the present occasion, he was denounced to the Assembly for the advice he gave to the soldiers. In his paper of the 2d May, he published the following passage:—‘It is more than six months since I foretold that your generals, all parasites of the court, would betray the nation, that they would give up the frontiers. My hope is, that the soldiers of the country will open their eyes, and be sensible that the first thing they have to do is to massacre those generals.’ The Assembly was justly incensed at such language, and passed a decree of impeachment against Marat; but to appease the clamour of the galleries and the extreme Gauche, a similar decree was passed against Royon, editor of the ‘Friend of the King,’ who was charged with inciting the soldiers to desert, and with uttering blasphemies against the nation.

The Assembly, having faith in the generals and the ministry, discarded the popular delusion of treachery; but turned, in its rage and mortification, against the priests termed refractory. Roland, as minister of the interior, presented a report on the state of the country, which he showed to be almost everywhere a prey to dissensions, commotions, calamities of every kind; the main instigators whereof he pronounced to be these deposed ecclesiastics, whose evil practices the directories of all the departments concurred in reprehending. The Assembly resolved to get rid of them as moral pests, regarding them in that light; and passed a decree enacting their expulsion from the kingdom. Servan, the minister at war, on his part, presented a report on the military defences of the country, and proposed the formation of an army of 20,000 men under Paris, to be composed of draughts from the National Guards of all the departments. The Parisian National Guards took offence at this proposal, as reflecting on their patriotism and valour; but the Jacobins strongly supported it, and the Assembly, on the 7th June, adopted it. The presentation of these two reports proves the confusion in which the affairs of government were carried on, inasmuch as neither was previously submitted to the king in council, nor even to the rest of the ministers. The real cause of this extraordinary muster of troops around Paris, was the fear of the Girondins that the Parisian National Guards might turn against them; for there is very

little doubt they had now made up their minds to depose Louis. With this object in view, they took the precaution to disband the guard of 1800 men provided for the king by the constitution, and which had only recently been formed by him of men picked from the regiments of the line and the National Guards. This force, appointed to be continually round the person of the king, was under the command of the Duke de Brissac, a faithful royalist; and it would have certainly offered an impediment, probably not a barrier, against a popular invasion of the palace. Louis was worked upon, by his usual apprehensions of exposing his adherents to danger (for he was warned that the Constitutional Guards would be murdered if he retained them), to sanction the decree for their disbandment. His compliance did not save the Duke de Brissac, however; for he was ordered to be impeached, and consigned to the prisons of Orleans, which were rapidly filling with the victims of Jacobin wrath.

No measure was observed in the denunciations of the king and the court at the Jacobin Club, in newspapers, and in addresses presented at the bar of the Assembly. In the first National Assembly tumultuous scenes had occurred, but in general a certain decorum was observed during its debates. In the present one, uproar and violence prevailed continually; members and spectators hooted, hissed, vociferated, and gesticulated with a fury that is not to be described. The reverses of the army had revived the notion of an Austrian committee, which was charged with giving exact information to the enemy of all the intended movements of the troops, whereby their defeat was fully accounted for. The meetings of this committee were named; Bertrand de Molleville and Montmorin were accused of being its principal members; and the people firmly believed in its existence. And not only were they taught to regard the king as a traitor to the country, but he was represented to them in the most odious colours. He was painted as a mere imbecile, a fatted calf, abandoned to the pleasures of the belly, wholly unfit to rule over men, and degrading the nation oppressed by him. The name of M. Veto was given to him in derision. The queen, too, was abused as the wily and perfidious Austrian, the betrayer of France, a scandal to mothers, the disgrace of her sex. Thus were mingled hatred and contempt aroused against them. It was amidst the ferment created by such accusations, that Louis took the perilous step of dismissing the three most popular of his ministers — Roland, Servan, and Claviere. A complete schism had occurred in the cabinet. Dumouriez, who was by no means steadfast to the principles he professed, yielding to the natural generosity of his disposition, sympathised with the king in his melancholy situation, and was disposed to ameliorate it if he could. To enable him to do so, nevertheless, he earnestly besought Louis to forego the determi-

nation he had formed in concert with Bertrand and Montmorin, whom he continued to consult in private—to refuse his sanction to the decrees against the priests, and for the camp under Paris. This sanction Roland, Servan, and Claviere yet more imperiously demanded; the former even addressed a letter to the king, prompted and written by his wife, wherein he lectured him with a boldness which was greatly applauded by the Jacobins. The Assembly received the intelligence of their dismissal with extreme indignation, and resolved that they carried with them the esteem and regret of the nation. Dumouriez had conceived he might be able to overawe and bridle the Jacobins, but he was soon convinced of his mistake. Fearing to prosecute the encounter, he abandoned the king, on the plea of his persisting in the veto upon the two decrees in question, and in a few days after the dismissal of his colleagues, resigned.* Thus did Louis dissolve his connection with the Jacobins.

He again threw himself into the arms of the Feuillans, some of whom he found courageous enough to accept the ministry under the untoward circumstances of the crisis. The new ministers were Chambonas, Lajard, Terrier de Monceil, and Beaulieu, all men of no note or consideration; for it was one of the misfortunes of the king that his choice was very limited, since no member of the late or present Assembly was eligible. The Feuillans, nevertheless, were anxious to rally round the throne and the constitution, and make a last effort to defend them. Lally-Tollendal returned at this time to Paris, with the hope of aiding in the enterprise, and concerted measures with his old comrades in the first battles of liberty. The principal members of the old *Côté-Gauche* were thus again brought together—no longer to resist the despotism of a king, but to contend for the existence of one. Barnave had retired into the country; but the Lameths and Duport still remained, with whom Lally-Tollendal sought to combine Bertrand and Montmorin. Lafayette willingly joined the confederacy, and drew over to it Marshal Luckner, commander of the army in Alsace. But the means of action were positively null. Situated between an insincere and even hostile court, and a powerful unscrupulous party, the constitutionalists could take no effective steps. To fight the Jacobins with legal

* Dumouriez, in his own memoirs, gives a very lively account of his conferences with the king and the queen on the subject of his retaining the ministry. He makes himself appear to very great advantage in the account; and though, in the main, his story is true, yet it is certain that Louis complained bitterly of his defection, and in a letter quoted by Bertrand (*'Private Memoirs,'* vol. ii. p. 284), even accused him of inconsistency, alleging that he had advised him to negative the two decrees. This was an error, doubtless; for Dumouriez was too shrewd and clear-headed not to discern not only the danger, but the inutility of the refusal. But Louis had made up his mind not to wound his conscience again on the score of the priests, and was prepared to brave every extremity rather than yield.

weapons was out of the question, and Lafayette could scarcely abandon the frontiers to the Austrians, and march his army on Paris. He might intimidate, however; and this he attempted to do. He wrote a letter to the Assembly full of indignant remonstrances against the language and conduct of the Jacobins, whom he denounced to be as much the enemies of France as the royalists themselves, since both strove to compass their ends by the same means—overturning the authority of the law, and plunging the country into anarchy. This letter made some impression on the Assembly; but it was laughed to scorn at the Jacobin Club, and Lafayette confounded with the detested herd of aristocrats.

Meanwhile, the preparations for an insurrection were prosecuted, it may be said, with deliberation and composure. The 20th of June, the anniversary of the tennis-court oath, was fixed upon as affording a pretext to assemble. The directory of the department, composed of constitutionalists, was the only authority that endeavoured to arrest the seditious movement by a formal order to the mayor, the municipality, and the commander of the National Guards, to prevent all assemblages contrary to the law. But Pétion took no heed of this; and although the Commune had refused permission for the citizens to meet in arms, as deputations from the faubourgs had demanded, by daybreak on the 20th groups began to gather, armed with all sorts of weapons, but principally pikes. Several battalions of the National Guards mingled with the multitude, and the whole was under the leadership of Santerre. The avowed object of the assemblage was to plant a tree of liberty, and present a petition to the Assembly and the king; a secret but indefinite design lurked to intimidate and perhaps to dethrone the latter. About eleven o'clock, the faubourgs of St Antoine and St Marceau having joined forces, and all being in readiness, the march commenced towards the hall of the Feuillans, with music and cannon, and amidst cries of *The sanction or death! Down with the priests! Death to tyrants!* The Assembly was engaged in warm discussion whether it should receive such a formidable concourse of petitioners. The Côté-Droit invoked the law against more than twenty persons, and unarmed, being admitted to the bar as a deputation. The Côté-Gauche replied, as was true, that this law had been frequently violated, and ought not to be enforced against citizens whose intentions were known to be pure and patriotic. The debate was at its height, and the two sides were vociferating against each other, when the insurgents, impatient to take part in the tumult, began to press into the hall. Upon their appearance a prodigious outcry was raised, the president put on his hat, and, awed in some measure by the significance of the rebuke, they retired. This indication of deference removed all further scruples, and the doors were thrown open for their admittance. In they poured with exulting shouts,

brandishing their weapons with gestures of defiance. They had come, they said, to show that they were still the men of the 14th July. Santerre read their petition, which was couched in the most outrageous language. Resistance to oppression was prescribed by the second article in the declaration of rights, it stated, and thus proceeded—‘Let the friends of arbitrary power declare themselves! Let them stand forth! The people, the true sovereign, is at hand to pass sentence upon them. Their place is not here. Let them evacuate the land of liberty; let them go to Coblenz, and join the emigrants.’—‘Are the people to be driven back to the period of the 14th July; again forced to take the sword of justice into their own hands, to avenge, at a single blow, the outraged law, and to punish the guilty and pusillanimous depositaries of that very law?’ To this extraordinary harangue the president replied in general terms, that the representatives of the people were ready to die at their posts in behalf of the constitution, and in defeating the machinations of conspirators. The petitioners were then allowed to file through the hall in procession. With women and boys, they amounted to about thirty thousand. They passed before the astonished legislators, preceded by drums and fifes, and a table bearing a copy of the declaration of rights. Some sang the *Ca Ira*, others danced, or howled execrations against priests and aristocrats, whilst from the galleries incessant volleys of vivas were kept up. Several flung their red caps into the air; some hoisted them on the ends of their pikes. Flags were borne with threatening mottos; one man hoisted a pair of ragged breeches, with a label inscribed, *Vivent les sans-culottes!* another a calf’s heart, with the words, *The heart of an aristocrat!* They took nearly four hours to pass through the hall; and when they had finally quitted it, Santerre appeared at the bar to present the Assembly with a flag, in token of their gratitude and respect.

As the procession emerged from the Assembly, it proceeded in the direction of the palace. The gates of the courts had been locked by orders from the king; the National Guards refused to open them, and the rioters attempted to break them down. At length a municipal officer advanced, and commanded the guard to open a gate which gave access to the terrace. The order was obeyed, and the multitude immediately flocked in, overbearing all opposition. Furious and maddening yells burst from the ranks of the insurgents as they rushed from the garden, through the courts, into the vestibule of the palace, and from the vestibule up the staircase, dragging with them, by superhuman force, a large piece of cannon. The interior doors were shut, locked, barricaded; but in vain; they were hewn down with axes. The king was, with all his family around him, in his private apartments. Upon hearing the noise, he came out into an antechamber, in

which several grenadiers of the National Guards were stationed, together with certain of his personal attendants. He found them in consternation: the invaders had already reached the door of the room, and were hammering it with all their might. He directed it to be opened, and advancing to meet the ruffians, said with calmness and dignity, 'Here I am; what do you want with me?' His aspect struck them with awe, and they stared in confusion, unconscious what to do. Those behind, however, pushed on, and soon the king was involved in a tumultuous crowd. Acloque, commander of a battalion of the National Guards, interfered to extricate him, driving back the people, and saying, 'Citizens, this is your king; respect him, for he is a good king.' Assisted by the grenadiers and attendants, he got him into a window recess in which a raised chair stood. On this the king seated himself, and his defenders planted themselves in front of him. The horrible shouts were again revived as the room filled with the excited populace, and there Louis sat, listening to such frightful vociferations, and beholding the armed rebels in all their gregarious hideousness. One of the ringleaders, Legendre, a butcher, asked him, in brutal language, if he chose to sanction the decrees. 'This is neither the time nor the place for such a question,' he replied firmly. Those who heard this reply shouted angrily, *Vive la nation!* 'Well, *vive la nation!*' said Louis; 'I am its best friend.' 'If that be the case, prove it,' cried one of the crowd, pressing forward, 'by putting this red cap on your head.' 'I have no objections,' answered the king; and the man placed the cap on his head amidst the plaudits of the insensate rabble.

The Princess Elizabeth, in her alarm for her brother, had made her way to his side, and now clasped him in her arms. 'There's the Austrian!' was the instant cry. An officer hastened to proclaim the truth, apprehensive of the consequences. 'Ah, why undeceive them?' said the princess. 'Let them believe I am the queen; it may prevent perhaps a greater crime.' Notwithstanding the danger she ran, the queen had also been anxious to join the king, but some faithful adherents had almost forcibly detained her. These conducted her to the council-chamber, and placed her behind the large table, as some sort of protection. The mob had overrun the whole palace, and there were assassins among it who thirsted for her blood. She had her daughter by her side, and on the table sat the little dauphin, gazing at the rude concourse with the vague curiosity of childhood. One fellow threw her a red cap, and told her to put it on the dauphin's head. She obeyed; and the poor boy sat sweltering under the burden until Santerre came up and cast it off, crying, 'The boy is smothered.' The whole multitude passed through this chamber, traversing the palace in its full extent, and for hours were the ears of Marie-Antoinette assailed with injurious epithets and menaces.

Pétion at last made his appearance. The crowd opened to let him pass, and he advanced to where the king was seated. 'Fear nothing, sire,' he said to him; 'you are in the midst of your people.' Taking the hand of a grenadier, Louis placed it on his heart, and said, 'Feel whether this heart beats with fear.' Even the most degraded of the rabble were struck with this noble answer, and applauded it. Pétion, then mounting on a chair, harangued the people; and after praising their conduct as conformable to the law, exhorted them to disperse, and resort peaceably to their homes. His voice was implicitly obeyed; and they forthwith proceeded to quit the palace, which was not wholly evacuated, however, before eight o'clock. The Assembly had sent several deputations to the Tuileries upon hearing of the king's danger; and the members had been instrumental in restraining the violence of the rioters. Several of them remained after the retreat of the latter, to whom the queen pointed out, with grief and indignation, the state in which the invasion had left the palace. Observing one of them, Merlin of Thionville, affected even to tears, she said to him, 'You weep, M. Merlin, to see the king and his family treated so cruelly by a people whom he has always wished to render happy.' 'It is true, madame,' replied Merlin; 'I weep at the misfortunes of a beautiful and affectionate woman, the mother of a family: but do not be deceived—my tears are not for the king or the queen; I hate kings and queens; such is the feeling they inspire me with, and such is my creed.' The queen looked at him with amazement, and was silent.

Thus ended the insurrection of the 20th June, which most assuredly would never have taken place if Lafayette had been mayor of Paris. Beyond gratifying the vile malignity of the populace and its abettors, it failed in all the purposes for which it was planned. The demeanour of Louis XVI. had been truly heroic; and instead of exhibiting the dastardly spirit attributed to him, he had, by a resigned fortitude, shown a most imposing front amid circumstances under which the stoutest and bravest heart might well have quailed. The Jacobins were disconcerted and abashed; and if the opportunity had been skilfully seized—such was the odium which covered them for the moment—they might have been crushed. The directory of the department ordered Pétion to be indicted, and in the meantime suspended him from office; a suspension confirmed by the king, but subsequently taken off by the Assembly. Throughout the country generally, and in the armies, great indignation was expressed, which was heightened by a proclamation from the king, drawn up in terms admirably fitted to kindle emotions of commiseration and anger. Lafayette hastened to Paris, and appeared at the bar of the Assembly. He spoke with vehemence against the atrocity

of the 20th June, and demanded, in the name of his army, the condign punishment of its promoters and their accomplices. From the Assembly he repaired to the king, who, true to the fatal system of refusing a constitutional alliance, gave him a very cool reception. He did not the less despair of subduing the Jacobins, and contemplated an attack upon their club; but he found his own party timid and dispirited, the National Guards friendly, but inert, the royalists stubborn and repulsive. Mortified and astounded at the reality of a change he had not dreamt was so complete, he abruptly left Paris, and hurried back to his army, escaping, by a narrow majority, a decree of impeachment. The Jacobins soon recovered their courage, and assumed a more audacious tone than ever. To evade the obstacle of the veto, they imagined the device of decrees of circumstance, which, being upon urgent and temporary matters, it was in the spirit of the constitution the king should not have power to annul, since the right of veto was meant to be only suspensive. Thus, if the king refused to take measures for protecting the country from invasion and conquest, it was the duty of the National Assembly to adopt them of its own authority. This principle once established, it was clear the functions of the king in the government were reduced to those of a mere administrator. Nevertheless, the idea was embraced with great ardour, and addresses were sent from all parts of the kingdom not only in support of it, but urging the expediency of solving all difficulties by at once deposing the king.* The Assembly, thus backed by the popular voice, observed no measure in its proceedings with the executive power. It appointed a committee of twelve to watch over the safety of the State, and commanded the ministers, on their responsibility, to report within twenty-four hours what measures they had taken in substitution of the two rejected decrees. No terrors or representations could induce Louis to yield on the subject of the nonjuring priests; but he consented to an army of reserve being formed, so that it was not assembled immediately under the walls of Paris. This army he proposed should consist of forty-two battalions, a half battalion being contributed by each department, and muster at Soissons, midway between Paris and the frontiers. Although this was not exactly what the Jacobins wished, the Assembly gave a sort of murmuring assent to it, but called not the less imperiously for information as to what was done in suppression of the disturbances caused by the priests.

* The language of these addresses may be judged by one sent from Lyons, which was a far more moderate city than any of the others. Speaking of the king, it says, 'Shall this man, who basely deserted his post, and who, after being replaced on the noblest throne in the world, so soon forgot the generosity of the nation, still direct the movements of our armies? A few days longer of indulgence, and liberty is no more. Attend to these warnings; they come from the majority of the citizens of a great city.'

Monciel, minister of the interior, retorted, by ascribing those disturbances chiefly to the manœuvres of the factious, by whom he implied the Jacobins, and affirmed that he had imposed increased activity and vigilance on the administrative and judicial authorities. Thus were the ministry and the Assembly in direct conflict.

Meanwhile, the dangers from abroad grew hourly more threatening. Prussia had put her army in motion, and the Austrians were already hovering on the French territory. The king had sent a confidential messenger, Mallet du Pan, to the powers, for the purpose of persuading them to act only on the defensive, until they had tried the effect of a proclamation addressed to the French; which course they were disposed to follow; but hostilities nevertheless unavoidably supervened. The French having advanced under Luckner, who had been removed to the Army of the North, they had occupied the towns of Ypres, Menin, and Courtray; but upon being attacked, they were repulsed, and driven back with disgrace to Lille. This fresh disaster immediately produced the usual consequence—the Assembly, the Jacobins, the faubourgs, were in a ferment. Accusations of treachery again resounded, and the Girondins prepared to take extreme measures to meet the emergency. On the 3d July, Vergniaud delivered a long oration, in which, without directly charging the king with wilfully neglecting and impairing the defences of the country, he held that it was manifest some sinister influence was at work, and that it behoved the Assembly to act with decisive energy. It appeared to him that the first step to be taken was to declare the country in danger, and the ministers responsible for the internal troubles arising out of religious dissensions, and for any invasion of France in consequence of insufficient precautions, in lieu of the camp vetoed by the king. A violent debate arose on this proposition, which continued for several days. The two sides fought as if for victory or death. All the acrimony of party passions was exhausted, and fierce recriminations were exchanged. Moved at the sight of such discord, when union was so desirable, the Abbé Lamourette, constitutional Bishop of Lyons, ascended the tribune, and addressed his colleagues in the language of moderation. Himself a stranger to political animosities, in a mild and earnest tone he exhorted them to mutual charity and good-will, reminding them that union was strength, and that against foreign foes they ought to oppose domestic concord. Believing that all were equally sincere in their love of country and of liberty, he besought them to drop their several topics of inculpation; and whereas one party accused the other of aiming at a republic, which the latter retorted by a counter-charge of contemplating the establishment of two chambers, he proposed that each project should be abjured,

exclaiming, with impassioned fervour, 'Devote them to execration by a last and irrevocable oath! Let us swear to have but one spirit, one sentiment! Let us swear everlasting fraternity! Let the enemy know that what we will is the determination of all, and the country is saved!' So thrilling was the effect of this sudden invocation of peace amid the outpourings of wrath, that the Assembly rose as one man, and, amidst the enthusiastic plaudits of the galleries, took an oath to maintain the constitution intact against the institution of either a republic or two chambers. 'Unite!—Embrace!' was the cry raised from several parts of the hall; and in a moment, by a universal impulse, the members flew into each others' arms from the opposite sides, and vowed mutual forgiveness—an eternal brotherhood. They mingled indiscriminately together, and the distinctions of *Côté-Gauche* and *Côté-Droit* were levelled. Sweet reminiscence, but vain delusion! In a few hours the croaking voice of Robespierre was heard snarling at the reconciliation as a trap of despotism; and the Girondins seemed almost ashamed of it, as an extravagance into which they had been too readily betrayed. Vergniaud's motion was referred to all the committees united, upon whose report, on the 11th July, the Assembly solemnly proclaimed the country in danger.

The consequences that were to follow this declaration had been previously ordained. The sittings of the Assembly were made permanent, as were also those of municipalities, departmental, and district councils. All citizens capable of bearing arms were rendered disposable for the service of the State. Minute guns were fired to notify the event to the inhabitants of Paris, among whom it caused an extraordinary sensation. Anxious and excited groups collected to bewail the calamity, but to vow resistance to the death. Booths were erected in the public places and squares, with banners floating over them, inscribed, *Citizens, the country is in danger*, in which municipal officers received the names of volunteers. Such was the general ardour, that 15,000 were enrolled in a few days. The same enthusiasm was communicated to the departments, some of which had already sent detachments of national volunteers either to recruit the army, or to form the camp decreed by the Assembly, despite the veto of the king. Among these the city of Marseilles had been foremost. In the hot blood of the south, revolutionary passions fermented madly. A band of the Marseillois had entered Paris on the 19th June, and had borne a part in the occurrences of the following day. A more considerable body of them arrived at this period, who were received with great distinction by the people of the faubourgs, who went out to meet them, and escorted them to the Champs Elysées, where a public entertainment had been prepared for them. They signalised their arrival by a characteristic

outrage. After dinner, and when excited by liquor, they attacked some Swiss officers and National Guardsmen who were regaling themselves at a tavern in the vicinity, knocked them down, took away their arms, and a lieutenant of the Guard attempting to resist, they killed him on the spot. They afterwards perambulated the streets of Paris, singing wild and savage airs, stopping all who wore silk cockades, and tearing them from their breasts, and spreading the greatest alarm throughout the city. These ferocious men, fit instruments of murder and insurrection, were purposely detained in Paris, whilst the detachments from other departments were sent forward to Soissons immediately after the federation of the 14th July.

This ceremony had not been observed in the previous year, owing to the suspension of the king after his flight to Varennes. It was determined to celebrate the anniversary this year with warlike pomp. But the scene was very different from the magnificent spectacle of 1790, when an exuberant joy pervaded the vast multitude assembled to represent confederated France. Now, a savage fanaticism animated the masses into whose hands the Revolution had passed, whilst gloomy apprehensions brooded over all the friends of order, whether constitutionalists or royalists. Louis took part in the pageant with that resignation which was so peculiar a feature in his character. Marie-Antoinette and her children, too, were present, seated in the balcony of the Military School. As figurative of the state of the country, the Champ de Mars was covered with tents, in which the public bodies encamped, so to speak. The procession of National Guards and Federalists started from the site of the Bastille, accompanied by an immense concourse of people. They halted and formed in front of the Military School, when the king descended, and placed himself in the midst of a square of troops, to proceed to the altar of the country. The order of the march was with difficulty preserved; the mob pressed upon the ranks of the soldiers, and soon all were involved in confusion. The king, dressed in a rich embroidered coat, and with his hair powdered, was seen struggling in the midst, surrounded on all sides by men and women, uttering with horrid yells—*Pétion for ever! Pétion, or death!* The queen gazed in the utmost consternation, fearing every moment to see him assassinated.* But the Guards succeeded in driving back the people,

* Louis, to satisfy the apprehensions of the queen, who was fully impressed with the belief that his life would be attempted on this occasion, wore a thickly-wadded under-waistcoat, sufficient to resist the blow of a dagger, or even of a ball. He himself had given up the fear of an assassination, and, as the queen told Madame Campan, 'had for some time viewed all that was passing in France as an imitation of the English revolution under Charles I., and was continually studying the history of that unfortunate monarch, in order that he might act better than he had done in a similar crisis.'—*Memoirs*, tome ii. p. 215.

and the king reached the steps of the altar in safety. As he mounted them to take the oath to the constitution, the idea of a victim offering himself for sacrifice struck vividly the imaginations of all present. Some of the courtiers around the queen burst into tears; she herself was so affected as almost to faint. When Louis had pronounced his oath, he returned in the same manner to the Military School. It was intended that he should set fire to a tree of feudalism which had been erected within the area of the Champ de Mars. This tree was decked with all sorts of crowns, mitres, and coronets—escutcheons, armorial bearings, and other emblems of the feudal system. Louis declined to fire this pile, saying that feudalism was already extinct; but the flames shot up, and cast their glare upon him as he advanced through the crowd, cracking, blazing, and devouring the symbols of the past. The people shouted with excessive glee, and with their accustomed levity now cheered the monarch by cries of *Vive le roi!* Rejoicing at the happy termination of the ceremony, in which he had participated reluctantly, and only with the fond hope of gaining popularity, he regained the Tuileries with his family. It was his last appearance in public until he mounted the scaffold.

Advices from the seat of war soon arrived, to dispel any good effects that might have resulted from the federation. The Prussian army had reached the frontiers, and the Duke of Brunswick, a general of high military reputation, been appointed to the command of the combined forces. The duke's head-quarters were at Coblenz, whence he issued a proclamation to the French nation on the 25th July. This proclamation was published in Paris on the 28th, and served to inflame the popular delirium to the highest pitch. It was expressed in language truly diabolical. If the French made any resistance to the progress of the invading army, they were threatened with all the horrors of unsparing vengeance—their houses would be burnt, their persons and their families be given up to the sword. The various authorities were made responsible, in life and fortune, for all disturbances that might occur previous to the arrival of the Prusso-Austrian troops; and the inhabitants of Paris, in particular, were warned that if the king, queen, and royal family were not immediately set at liberty, or if any violence were committed on them, the city of Paris would be visited by an ever-memorable chastisement, abandoned to military execution, and exposed to total destruction. In truth, the presumptuous boasting and the barbarous sentiments of this manifesto are not paralleled in the annals of civilisation. Poor Louis, who expected so very different an annunciation, was dismayed, and hastened to protest against it to the Assembly. But his protestations were of little avail: it was obvious what the real intentions of the allies were—namely, to subjugate France,

and impose on her such a government as it pleased them; and as their views were held to be coincident with his, he gained no credit for his disavowals. It only needed such a stimulus as this to produce the outbreak of the insurrection which had been long planned. The preparations for the event were made with the full cognisance of the court. The Jacobin Club had organised a committee called the *Insurrectionary Committee*, which devised all the arrangements, and Danton was at its head. The maxim of this man was, that boldness was the alpha and omega of revolutions; the first, the second, the third thing needful. And assuredly he was right, as the course of this revolution abundantly verified; for superior audacity had been throughout the principle of success. He and his confederates did not spare its application in the present instance. The Assembly was pressed, by repeated addresses, to depose the king, and even menaced if it failed to do so within a certain time. Pétion presented one of these addresses at the bar in the name of the Commune of Paris. Brissot was so far influenced by them, as to move that the committee of twelve be charged to inquire what were the acts that induced a forfeiture of the crown, and whether Louis XVI. had been guilty of any such; which was decreed accordingly. Meanwhile, the garden of the Tuileries was continually filled with the vilest populace, vociferating abusive epithets, and exhibiting disgusting caricatures; insomuch that the royal family could not venture to leave the palace. The nuisance grew so intolerable, that the garden gates were shut, and the public excluded. But every act, however simple or defensible in its nature, was perverted to the detriment of the king. The Assembly declared that the terrace of the Feuillans was included within the precincts of its hall, and, as such, was sacred to the nation; consequently access to it was free: but to prevent the people from trespassing beyond it, its limit was marked by a tricoloured ribbon drawn across the terrace, the rest of the garden being styled *the land of Coblenz*. The people were not slow to divine the malevolence of this distinction, and respected the feeble barrier. Thus, do what he might, it was impossible for Louis to conciliate his relentless persecutors.

It is not to be supposed that the court took no measures to protect itself against a catastrophe thus openly announced. In the first place, attempts were made to avert it. The royalists, through Bertrand and Montmorin, formed a plan for the king's escape to Compiègne, which seemed feasible. Lafayette offered to concur in it, and Lally-Tollendal communicated his proposal to the king. But Louis was very averse to resort a second time to the experiment of an evasion, the remembrance of the former failure being ever present to his mind; and he preferred almost any other expedient. The Girondin leaders were sounded—Verg-

niaud, Guadet, and Gensonné—and they were content to arrest the movement, if the three patriot ministers, Roland, Servan, and Claviere, were reinstated. By this it would seem the Girondins were willing to uphold the monarchy, if the government was wholly abandoned to them. But from this Louis also recoiled, and no resource was left but to intrench himself in the Tuileries with as large a force as he could collect. He called to his defence a corps of 800 Swiss, which still remained in the vicinity of Paris, and such of the battalions of the National Guard as were thought favourable to his cause. The officers of the disbanded Constitutional Guard rallied round him, as did also several royalist noblemen and gentlemen armed with swords and pistols. Cannon were planted in the courts and garden, and thus all the preparations made for repelling an attack that were possible. The insurgents had not agreed among themselves as to the day on which the rising was to take place. The 26th July had been first named, and afterwards subsequent days, so that irresolution was beginning to creep into their councils; and if the Assembly and the Commune had stood by the king, their designs might yet have been prevented.* But those bodies stood aloof, and quietly looked on as the belligerents prepared for the conflict. A fearful gloom and uneasiness prevailed in the palace amid this awful suspense. The appearance of the court on Sunday the 5th August was at once affecting and interesting. The levee on that day was attended by a numerous and brilliant company, but on the countenances of all sat an unquiet and melancholy expression. The king and queen were oppressed by dire presentiments, and responded to the homage of their faithful adherents with the sad smile of despondency. Many wept with emotion, for the situation of the king was sufficient to arouse the sensibilities of all generous hearts. At vespers in the royal chapel a singular scene was witnessed. The choristers, by concert among themselves, repeated more than once, and with exulting emphasis, carolling with triple altitude, the sentence in the Magnificat, *Deposuit potentes de sede*—('He hath put down the mighty from their seat'). Irritated at this daring insult in the presence of the king and queen, the royalists, forgetting the sanctity of the place, retorted by adding to the *Domine fac salve regem*, the words *et reginam*, which they shouted in stentorian chorus. The choristers answered

* The fact is, that, notwithstanding all their arts to incense the people against the king, they were sadly in want of some stirring pretext to move them; so much so, that Chabot, who was one of the insurrectionary committee at the Jacobins, seriously proposed that a popular deputy should be killed in the environs of the palace, and his murder charged upon the court. He offered himself to be the victim of this astounding crime, though, from his flagitious character, his sincerity may well be doubted. A fanatic named Grangeneuve appears to have really intended sacrificing himself to support this calumny; but he was disappointed, for nobody came to kill him.

with a taunting repetition; and thus were the very solemnities of religion profaned by evidences of the bitter animosities prevailing.

At length the 10th of August was definitively fixed for the explosion. At midnight of the 9th, the tocsin was sounded throughout Paris. The bands of insurgents began to gather in the faubourgs St Antoine and St Marceau, under the leadership of Santerre and Westermann. The assemblies of the sections were held, in which confederates alone were present; and these appointed 192 new representatives of the Commune, who proceeded to the Hotel de Ville, and installed themselves as a municipality. On the other hand, Mandat, commander of the National Guard, who was devoted to the king, posted his battalions and artillery to defend all the approaches to the palace; the Swiss were stationed in the rear of the courts, and at the foot of the great staircase; the royalist volunteers, the officers of the disbanded guard, and the attendants of the palace, were assembled in the antechambers leading to the apartments of the king and queen. The ministers sat in the council-chamber deliberating on measures of safety; they sent to summon the mayor and the directory of the department. Pétion attended, and gave a written order to Mandat, authorising him to resist, if attacked; and then proceeded to the Assembly, whither he was called by a decree passed to prevent his being detained in the palace. From the Assembly he repaired to the Hotel de Ville, where he was put under arrest, to insure his inactivity, as had been arranged. The directory of the department joined the council of ministers, accompanied by Rœderer, its procurator-syndic. The king moved uneasily between the council and his bedroom, now hearing what fresh intelligence had been gathered, now attempting to catch a few moments of repose, and at times retiring with his confessor to supplicate Heaven for support in this hour of trial. The queen and the Princess Elizabeth also remained up all night, lying on a sofa, and encouraging each other to fortitude under their misfortunes. The new Commune, upon hearing that Pétion had given Mandat a written order to resist, sent a message to the latter, commanding his presence at the Hotel de Ville, to give an account of his proceedings. As the change effected in that body was not known at the palace, Mandat, under the advice of Rœderer, who held he was bound to obey the civil authority of the city, proceeded to the hotel. Upon entering the great hall, he was surprised to see none but strange faces, and immediately conceived fears of the worst. He was interrogated as to the dispositions he had made, and replied falteringly. He was ordered to be conveyed to the Abbaye; but upon reaching the bottom of the steps, he was shot dead. His clothes were rifled for Pétion's order; but Mandat had transferred it to his son, and it was consequently

not found. His corpse was cast into the Seine. He was the first victim of the insurrection.

The murder of Mandat was an irreparable loss to the defence of the palace, since, fortified by Pétion's order, he had intended to attack the insurgents the moment they appeared on the Place du Carrouzel, and before they had time to form or plant their cannon. Such a sudden attack might have readily caused a panic, and put an end to the commotion. To repair the mischief, and animate their defenders, at break of day the king and queen, leading their children by the hand, descended into the courts and garden, and went through the ranks of the National Guard. But their appearance aroused little enthusiasm; a few cries of *Vive le roi!* greeted them, but those of *Vive la nation!* were far more numerous. The artillerymen, in particular, showed the worst possible disposition. In truth, Louis XVI. was not adapted to kindle the fire of attachment in the breasts of strangers, and least of all in those of soldiers. Timid, and constrained in manner, his person, too, was ungainly; and though a certain air of dignity marked his countenance, the expression now was one of stupor. Pale and care-worn, he might cause an emotion of pity, but that feeling is allied to contempt in the minds of the vulgar. The queen was sensible that the review was a failure, and on her return to the palace, exclaimed that the king had lost all by his want of energy. This was, in reality, the fact; for when the insurgents arrived, and began to invest the palace, the only battalion that stood to its post was that of the Filles-Saint-Thomas. The others drew off, or joined the insurgents, under pretence that the palace was filled with 'Knights of the Dagger,' as the royalist volunteers were opprobriously called. Seeing this defection, Rœderer hastened to the council-chamber, and announced that the only resource left was to take refuge in the hall of the Assembly. He said that the palace would inevitably be stormed, and the lives of all within it sacrificed. Louis was anxious to avoid an effusion of blood, especially after it had become useless, and inclined to follow this counsel. But the queen violently opposed it. 'What!' said she, 'deliver the king into the hands of his enemies!' 'Remember, madame,' Rœderer replied, 'you endanger the lives of your husband and children. Think of the responsibility you take upon yourself.' Still she resisted. Her pride, her courage, her sensibility, all revolted at the idea of seeking shelter among men she so profoundly abhorred. She was excited with anger, vexation, and grief; her eyes were red and swollen with weeping; but she preserved her animation, and spoke with commanding emphasis. At length, convinced of the absolute necessity of the measure, her haughty spirit yielded; but turning to Rœderer, she said, 'You, sir, and all of you, are answerable for the life of the king, and for that of my son.' 'Madame,' Rœderer

replied, 'we undertake to die by your side, but that is all we can promise.' 'Come, let us go,' said the king; 'there is nothing more to be done here.'

The Assembly had met soon after the ringing of the tocsin. When a sufficient number of members was present to form the Assembly, the minister of justice had appeared to notify the danger of the king, and to request that a deputation might be sent to protect him. This was an awkward demand to grant or to deny, and the Assembly took time to deliberate. The deliberation continued so long, that it was not concluded when word came that the king was on his way. A deputation was appointed to receive him at the threshold, the last mark of respect it vouchsafed Louis. Meanwhile, the short transit from the Tuileries to the Feuillans was attended with great danger. The space was crowded with insurgents, through whom it was difficult for the escort to penetrate. In the confusion, the queen's watch and purse were abstracted. A huge ruffian seized the dauphin in his arms; and when the queen shrieked with terror, he said to her, 'Don't be afraid; I'll do him no harm;' and in truth he carried him safely, and deposited him on the table of the Assembly. At length the passage was effected, and the deputation met the king, the head of it saying, 'Sire, the Assembly, solicitous to insure your safety, offers you and your family an asylum in its fold.' Leading them through the corridors, which were dark, and filled with people, the deputation ushered Louis and his family into the Assembly, conducting them to the ministers' benches. The king rising, said, 'Gentlemen, I have come here to prevent a great crime, and I think I can be nowhere safer than among you.' The president replied, 'Sire, you may rely upon the firmness of the National Assembly, whose members have sworn to die in maintaining the rights of the people and the constituted authorities.' Louis thereupon proceeded to seat himself in his chair beside the president; but Chabot remarked that, according to the constitution, the Assembly could not deliberate in the presence of the king, and it was in consequence resolved that he and his family should be consigned to a reporter's box behind the president's chair, whither they were accordingly removed. This box was about six feet square, and besides the royal family, the persons who had accompanied them from the palace were likewise shut up in it.

The conflict and butchery Louis had hoped to avert did not the less take place. Upon his retreat to the Assembly, the Swiss were called into the interior of the palace, so that the courts were left empty, but the gates remained shut. These the insurgents soon drove in with cannon, and advancing forwards, opened a parley with the Swiss stationed in the vestibule and at the windows of the palace. They proposed that the Swiss should deliver to them the possession of the palace. The Swiss officers, who had

constructed a barricade at the foot of the staircase, replied that their orders were not to attack, but to defend their posts if attacked. The Marseillois, who were foremost in the assault, attempted, by hooks fastened to the end of pikes, to catch the sentinels at the entrance of the vestibule; in which they succeeded; and drawing them to them, first disarmed, and then despatched them. They then made a rush at the barricade, carried it, and forced their way up the stairs. At the top, they were met by some Swiss officers, who still kept their men from firing, and sought to persuade them to retire. This only increased their audacity; and at length the Swiss, together with some grenadiers of the battalion Filles-Saint-Thomas, were obliged to charge them. A desperate affray ensued; but the insurgents were repulsed, driven down the stairs, hunted out of the courts, and put completely to flight. The Swiss even took their cannons, and on this side the palace was completely cleared of assailants. Meanwhile, the noise of the firing was heard in the Assembly, where it caused great consternation. The king was intreated to send an order to the Swiss, forbidding them to fire; he weakly complied, and a young officer, M. d'Hervilly, consented to carry it to the palace. This was a task of infinite danger, for he had to traverse the garden, filled with insurgents keeping up an incessant fire on the palace, which was returned by its defenders. Boldly passing through this cross fire, he reached the royal court in safety, and communicated the king's order to the Swiss. He directed them to follow him to the Assembly, which they joyfully agreed to do, thinking they were to be employed in protecting the king. In their transit, they were exposed to a tremendous fire from the insurgents, and nearly half of them fell killed or wounded. Upon their arrival at the Assembly, they were disarmed, and sent to prison. These formed only a portion of the whole Swiss force; the palace was still defended by a considerable number, besides the royalist volunteers. The insurgents had recovered from their first panic, and returned to the assault. Finding the courts unguarded, they rushed furiously up the stairs, and now, by overwhelming numbers, speedily overpowered the Swiss, whom they cut remorselessly to pieces, even after they had thrown away their arms, and craved for mercy on their knees. Spreading over the palace, they massacred all its inmates, from the armed defenders to the lowest menials. Madame Campan and some of the queen's ladies were spared when about to be immolated. A voice cried out, 'Pardon the women; don't disgrace the nation;' and they were conducted in safety to an asylum. The massacre was continued outside in the courts, the garden, and the streets; very few fugitives contrived to escape. Of 800 Swiss, only 150 survived the slaughter, and these were they who had accompanied or followed the king to the Assembly.

When tired of killing, the conquerors appeared in the Assembly to dictate the law. With frightful imprecations they demanded the immediate deposition of Louis XVI. The president answered submissively, that, by the constitution, the Assembly was not competent to depose the king, but that it would convoke a national convention to determine the question. With this they were ultimately persuaded to be satisfied; and the Assembly, upon a report from the committee of twelve, passed a formal decree that a national convention should be summoned, Louis in the interim suspended from the royal authority, the payment of the civil list stopped, fresh ministers appointed, and proclamations issued to the nation and the armies enjoining order and obedience. The Luxembourg was originally destined for the residence of the king, but the people objected that there were subterraneous passages with unknown outlets in that building; and until the fact could be ascertained, it was determined that he and his family should occupy the apartments in the Feuillants belonging to Camus the archive keeper. The royal prisoners had continued during the whole of this tumultuous sitting in the reporter's box, exposed to anxieties and insults of the most harrowing description, and with scarcely any refreshment to relieve their wants. The heat was excessive, and the king suffered most acutely. The young dauphin slept the greater part of the time on the lap of the queen. The Princess Elizabeth could scarcely restrain her indignation when she heard the abuse heaped upon her brother, and the princess-royal betrayed the terror and affliction natural to her age. After undergoing these torments for sixteen hours, they were, at one in the morning, removed to the rooms assigned them, which formed part of the old dormitory of the monks, fitted up with furniture of the meanest description. In this confined and sorry lodging they were immured, surrounded by a numerous and vigilant guard.*

Thus was the ancient monarchy of France, in the person of its most virtuous and amiable prince, annihilated. The catastrophe had been long pending, and was at last consummated by the bloody day of the 10th of August.

* Madame Campan and her sister visited the queen on the following day. 'In the third room,' she says, 'we found the queen, in bed, and in an indescribable state of affliction. She was alone with a stout woman, whose demeanour seemed sufficiently becoming, and who was the keeper of the rooms; she waited upon the queen, who had not yet any of her own people about her. While we conversed, the dauphin came in, with the princess-royal and the Marchioness de Tourzel. On seeing them, the queen exclaimed, "Poor children! how cruel is our fate not to transmit to them so splendid an inheritance, and to have it said it ended with us!"'—*Memoirs*, tome ii. p. 253.

CHAPTER VI.

NATIONAL CONVENTION—TRIAL AND EXECUTION OF LOUIS XVI.—

SEPTEMBER 1792 TO 21ST JANUARY 1793.

The constitution of 1791, then, immutable on its face, perishable in its core, fell after a trial of ten months. The future government of France was to be regulated by a National Convention, convoked forthwith, and elected upon the wide basis of universal suffrage. In the interim, the departments of the ministry were preserved, and filled by men who formed what was called the Executive Council. The three ministers dismissed by Louis XVI. were reinstated by acclamation: Roland in the interior, Servan in the war, and Claviere in the finance departments. Monge, a mathematician, was appointed to the office of the marine, and Lebrun to that of foreign affairs, whilst Danton was selected as the most appropriate to perform the functions of the minister of justice. The new Commune of Paris was confirmed in power, and the command of the National Guard conferred on Santerre. The king and his family, after remaining three days in the Assembly, the objects of incessant denunciations, were shut up in the tower of the Temple, a small gloomy prison, where municipal officers kept personal watch on them night and day. They were at first accompanied in their confinement by the Princess de Lamballe, and certain male and female attendants; but these the suspicious Commune soon caused to be removed, on pretence that they maintained, or might maintain, a criminal correspondence outside. Only one male attendant was left with them, M. Hue, who performed all necessary offices for the whole family.* The Tuileries having been completely sacked and plundered, and in part consumed by fire, they were reduced to destitution, even to the lack of a change of linen; and but for supplies

* On the first day Louis and his family were taken to the Temple, they were put into the part called the Palace, from which they were removed at night. Hue was conducted by a municipal officer to inspect their new abode. He himself relates the scene. "“Your master,” said the municipal to me, “was used to gilt ceilings; he shall now see how the assassins of the people are lodged. Follow me.” I followed him up several steps. A narrow door led me to a spiral staircase. When from this principal staircase I entered upon a smaller one, which conducted me to the second floor, I perceived that I was in a tower. I went into a room, which had but one window, and scarcely any furniture, there being only a mean bed and three or four chairs. “Here,” said the municipal to me, “is the place where your master has to sleep.” Chamilly had joined me: we looked at each other without uttering a syllable. A pair of sheets was thrown to us as a favour, and we were left alone for a few moments.”—*Hue’s work quoted in Authentic Memoirs of the sufferings of the Royal Family*, p. 107.

of clothes sent by private individuals (amongst the rest, the wife of the British ambassador), they would have remained in that dismal condition; for no consideration or mercy was shown to them by the barbarous wretches into whose power they had fallen. Indignities were studiously heaped upon them, and their captivity imbibed by every device the vilest malignity could invent. Louis bore all with an affecting resignation, which would have been heroic if it had not sprung in some measure from a natural insensibility, blunting the keenness of his emotions: the queen manifested that haughty reserve which befitted her character: the Princess Elizabeth, by her angelic piety, illumined the darkness of the dungeon, and imparted consolation where comfort or cheerfulness could not reign.

Whatever hopes the Girondins had formed from the subversion of the throne, were doomed to be signally blasted. Instead of the gentle Louis for a master, they had given themselves an overbearing and insatiable Commune, prompted by Robespierre, Danton, and Marat. Wielding the insurrectionary force of the capital, this Commune was omnipotent, and imposed its commands on the Assembly with all the insolence of superiority. Before its menacing deputations the orators of the Gironde were dumb. No longer Brissot, Isnard, Vergniaud, who were wont to be so valiant in defying and maligning a helpless king, ventured to raise their voices; they had sunk into terror-stricken puppets. At the dictation of the Commune, the Assembly decreed the formation of an extraordinary tribunal for the trial of offences connected with the 10th of August, divided into two courts, for the sake of despatch, and composed of permanent juries, nominated by electors deputed from the several sections of Paris. As some hesitation was evinced in erecting so formidable an instrument of revolutionary vengeance, repeated deputations from the Commune insisted upon the measure, each excelling the other in violence of language. 'The people are tired of not being avenged,' they said; 'take care lest they do themselves justice. If within a certain hour the juries are not put in activity, this very day, at midnight, the tocsin shall be rung, and heavy calamities will fall upon Paris.' Some deputies remonstrated against such flagrant intimidation, and sought to encourage the Assembly to display a dignified resistance; but it shrunk from the peril, and succumbed. So, too, with regard to usurpations of authority by the Commune of the most audacious character, it was fain to be silent, and wink at them. Thus it allowed that body to cashier the directory of the department, which was legally a superior authority, and gave umbrage on that account, together with all other municipal and judicial functionaries, save Pétion, who was retained as a useful tool, still possessing a considerable share of popularity. In fact, the Commune proceeded, without let or hindrance, to exercise the

highest prerogatives of sovereignty. It appointed a committee of research, armed with the powers of a practical despotism, which speedily filled the prisons of Paris to overflowing. It sent commissioners into the departments, who took upon themselves to supersede all persons in office who were not known to be ultra-Jacobins, and to put others in their places. Thus, by boldness and promptitude, it aspired to seize the reins of government, and to overrule the elections of deputies to the National Convention. Its conduct, and the success attending it, show how the most violent and unscrupulous gain the ascendancy in civil turmoils, because the resisting party is always restrained by considerations of order and legality, which clog and neutralise its action. Louis XVI. had fallen through lack of energy, derived equally from his character and from his position, which debarred him from resorting to aggression as a means of defence. The constitutionalists may be said to have had no existence, so speedily were they, through their conceited apathy and want of foresight, swept from the scene. The Girondins, who last opposed a barrier to the progress of anarchy, betrayed the same feebleness in the contest, and withstood the demagogical shock but a brief interval. It is the inherent curse of human strife that rational compromises must always follow, or at least very rarely precede, the exhaustion of hostilities. Reason resumes her sway only when passions are completely satiated or stifled.

In the Executive Council the Commune ruled as over the Assembly, through its representative Danton.* He, with his loud voice, rough manner, threats, and oaths, browbeat and silenced his colleagues. Roland alone refused to tolerate his arrogance and submit to his dictatorship. This minister was a truly honest and upright man; and he was emboldened, moreover, by the courage and ambition of his wife, who affected the stern virtues of a Roman matron. He opposed Danton chiefly in the employment of the secret service money, of which the Assembly had voted a supply of two millions of francs. Danton insisted that each of the

* During the first days of his ministry, Danton often visited Madame Roland, and she thus describes him: 'I studied with attention that repulsive and frightful countenance; and although I argued with myself that a man ought not to be judged by hearsay, that I knew nothing positively against him, that the most honest man might have two reputations in a time of discord; that, in short, appearances ought not to be trusted—I could not conceive the idea of virtue or integrity lurking beneath such a visage. I have never beheld anything which so perfectly depicted the sway of the brutal passions, and an astounding audacity, half hidden under an air of joviality and an affectation of frankness and a sort of good-nature.'—*Memoirs*, t. ii. p. 14. The sort of influence he exercised may be judged by the following anecdote:—One day Roland discovered his name attached to a naval commission he had positively refused to sign. He remonstrated with Monge on the circumstance. 'Danton would have it,' the latter answered in a frightened whisper; 'if I had refused him, he would have denounced me to the Commune and the Cordeliers, and had me hanged.' 'For my part,' observed the inflexible Roland, 'I would rather perish than yield to such considerations.'—*Rol.*, vol. ii. p. 21.

ministers should dispense as much of this fund as he chose without rendering any account, whilst Roland contended that its application ought to be voted by the whole Council, for the specific objects proposed by the individual ministers. Danton's proposition was too agreeable to the rest of the Council not to be adopted; and Roland was reduced to enter a vehement protest against it, declaring that he would not himself use the money without the sanction of the Council. This austerity caused him to be very distasteful to the Jacobin leaders, and they soon began to fabricate against him the most odious libels. He added to their rage by calling upon the Commune to account for the spoils of the Tuileries; by directing Santerre to double the posts at the Garde Meuble, the repository of the crown jewels and other valuable articles, which he had reason to believe was marked for pillage; and, above all, by complaining to the Assembly of the conduct of the Commune, which thwarted and nullified the operations of his department. The abuse the Jacobin papers had been accustomed to pour upon the king and queen was diverted against Roland and his wife. The latter was even more furiously assailed than her husband. As the ministers and the principal members of the Gironde often assembled at her house, calumnies were easily invented of luxurious feasts, intemperate revels, licentious excesses, and treasonable plots against the people.* It was a usual device with the conductors of these scurrilous prints to publish conversations, wholly imaginary, in which they ascribed to those they sought to ruin sentiments and projects calculated to excite popular indignation. This plan they had pursued with much success against Louis and Marie-Antoinette; and it was found to answer too well with the stupid populace to be dropped with their downfall. Marat alone disdained the mean artifices of forgery: his cry was still demoniac, but it was monotonous: the indiscriminate massacre of all who, by education, worth, or distinction of any kind, were raised above the herd of the multitude, was the burden of his execrable pleadings. The especial objects of denunciation with him at the present moment were *statesmen*, whom he proscribed as natural and inveterate enemies of the people, and amongst whom he honoured the Girondins by enrolling them. Yet the promulgator of so atrocious a paradox, instead of being consigned to a madhouse or the galleys, was made a ruler over the great community of France, so recently the centre of philo-

* Madame Roland, writing in a prison, and awaiting the stroke of the guillotine, thus touchingly speaks of these cruel aspersions upon her character: 'Those who knew me at that time,' she says, 'will one day testify in my behalf, when the voice of truth can be heard. I will probably be no more, but I will leave the world with a firm conviction that the memory of my calumniators will be buried under maledictions, whilst I shall be remembered sometimes with tenderness.'—*Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 10.

sophy, the seat of those arts which bespeak the advancement of knowledge and the refinement of manners!

The occurrence of the 10th of August caused great, but a fleeting excitement in the armies. The Assembly had hastened to despatch commissioners to all of them, with the view of insuring their adhesion to the new order of things, and rivetting its own authority over the generals. These had taken so many oaths to the constitution, that, from the proverbial nicety of a soldier's honour, they might well be expected to prove at least repugnant, if not refractory. But in presence of an enemy preparing to invade their country; with indifference to the cause of the king, who was identified with the hostile emigrants; in fine, from the patriotic and military ardour burning in the breasts of all to repulse the savage Brunswick—they made little difficulty in the transfer of their allegiance. One alone could not, by his position and principles, consent to the change. This was Lafayette. The Jacobins had only lately almost succeeded in procuring his impeachment, and there was little doubt he would fall their victim now. He must either attempt resistance or fly the country. He chose the first, and put the commissioners from the Assembly into prison. He proposed to summon a counter-assembly at Sedan, in the midst of his army; but he soon found his soldiers indisposed to support him. They refused, at his solicitation, to renew the oath to the constitution, and he became conscious of the painful truth, that his only hope of safety was in exile. With a mournful heart he set out to cross the frontier, accompanied by some of his staff, among whom were Alexander Lameth and Latour-Maubourg. They were emigrants of a very different class from those of Turin and Coblenz: it was not their purpose to take up arms against their country, however ungratefully she ejected them from her bosom, but to retire to America. They were stopped by the Austrian outposts, and placed under arrest. They could not be justly detained, for they were not even prisoners of war, but they were nevertheless treated as criminals. Great was the joy of the emigrants that Lafayette, the very champion and apostle of liberty himself, was a fugitive, and a captive at their mercy. But the Emperor Francis claimed the satisfaction of wreaking vengeance upon him. In the eyes of that monarch, throughout his long life, no crime was so heinous as that of advocating political freedom to nations, and no punishment for it too severe. In the spirit of a true barbarian, as he was, he threw Lafayette and his companions into the dungeons of Olmütz, where they pined for years, until the triumphant sword of a revolutionary hero compelled him with shame to release them. What dire miseries were inflicted upon his unfortunate victims by that ruthless despot, the plaintive tale of Silvio Pellico has told to the indignant world. It is indeed fitting that such a man should be

marked with the stigma of infamy.* As for Lafayette, he disappeared from a scene on which he could no longer have been an actor. His dream of establishing a rational liberty in France was at an end. Constitutional freedom is a blessing nations cannot enjoy without a long training; and it would almost seem that certain races are absolutely incapable of retaining it even when they obtain it. Among these, it is doubtful whether the French are not to be included. How different a people had Lafayette met on the other side of the Atlantic! There an earnest, frugal, religious community had, through the medium of its assembled sages, given itself a constitution which from the first bore the promise, and since the fruit, of permanence, because the institutions of liberty were already familiar to it, and needed only to be additionally popularised when political independence was achieved. The authors of the American constitution lived amongst their countrymen, honoured and venerated: the authors of the French constitution were persecuted as public enemies; and if they escaped the axo of the domestic guillotine, they fell into the fangs of foreign tyrants, who, invoking the names of order, justice, and legality, scrupled not to violate all safeguards when it was in their power to take a dastardly revenge.

Dumouriez, who had ever his wits about him, made a great parade of the alacrity with which he hailed the 10th of August; and so satisfied the Jacobins, that the command of the two armies of the North and Centre were conferred on him. It was a fortunate choice, and saved France from degradation, if not extinction. Dumouriez was an approved veteran: his maiden sword he had dipped in the blood of Germans in the seven years' war; he had fought with the Poles to sustain their nationality; he had assisted to vanquish Paoli and the bold patriots of Corsica. He was now to confront the Prussians under Brunswick and the king of Prussia, who had come from his capital to partake the trip to Paris, and enact the pleasing part of a conqueror. Their purpose was to take the shortest road to Paris, both to make

* The unjust imprisonment of Lafayette and his companions was the occasion of animated debates both in the Congress of the United States and in the Parliament of Great Britain. It aroused, indeed, the remonstrances of the friends of liberty throughout the world; but the obdurate emperor was inaccessible to all appeals, whether of compassion or of reason. Even at the last moment, he resorted to mean and despicable subterfuges to deceive Bonaparte, and induce him to forego insisting upon their liberation. He pretended they were already discharged, and had long ago proceeded to America. Bonaparte refused to credit his word, and sent Romeuf, Lafayette's old aid-de-camp, to ascertain the truth. When no longer able to prevaricate or evade the condition, Francis attempted to extort from the captives—who were kept in separate dungeons, and in ignorance of all that was passing in the world—ignominious avowals, which every one of them refused to sign; and with such pain and reluctance did he at last relax his hold, that it was not until the 19th September 1797 that they were finally liberated, being several months after the conclusion of the treaty of Campo-Formio, and upwards of five years from their first incarceration.—*Hist. de France, by Toulangeon, t. v. 9e epoque, App. 2.*

quick despatch of the business, and because, trusting to the delusive promises of the emigrants, they had taken no heed to provide magazines: it was not a campaign they were entering upon, but a summer excursion, in which they would be abundantly supplied by the glad peasants of France. So excessive was the infatuation of these proud fools, that they actually neglected to collect stores of medicines and aliments to relieve the sick—thinking, doubtless, that disease or wounds were things not to be contemplated. It is seldom that such inane presumption fails to be chastised, and the present is a very memorable instance of Providential retribution. The situation of Dumouriez, nevertheless, was extremely hazardous and perplexing. When he received the command-in-chief, he was with the Army of the North, and his first design was to change the war from defensive to offensive, and invade Belgium, which had revolted against Austria in 1789, and was again ready to throw off her detested yoke. But the advance of the Prussians rendered this impracticable. These, 60,000 strong, had entered France from Luxembourg, and invested Longwy, which surrendered after a feeble defence of two days. Thence they advanced to besiege Verdun, which was weakly garrisoned. They were thus between the two French armies of the Centre and the East, stationed at Sedan and Metz respectively. The latter was under the command of Luckner, who was shortly replaced by Kellermann. Dillon had been sent by Dumouriez to supply the place of Lafayette at Sedan; but in so critical an emergency, it became imperative on him to repair thither in person. He found the army in very bad humour with him, from his known hostility to Lafayette, who was much beloved by his soldiers, although they had refused to support him against the Assembly. It was, moreover, agitated by conflicting opinions upon the late events at Paris, and full of suspicions against its officers and generals. It was composed of 18,000 foot and 5000 horse, more than half of whom were National Guards. Dumouriez soon succeeded in dispelling the prejudice against him, and pondered anxiously the course he was to pursue, on which evidently depended the salvation of France. With quick penetration he formed his plan. To penetrate into Champagne, the Prussians must traverse the forest of Argonne, through which ran four different roads. To get into these roads before them was his object. But they were much nearer to them than he was, and he had furthermore to pass an Austrian corps of 20,000 men under General Clairfayt, stationed on the Meuse at Stenay. He must conceal his movement and his intention from this Austrian. He set Dillon to amuse him with a sham attack, under cover of which he decamped on the 30th August, and by the 3d September, was in possession of the principal passes of the forest, which he lost no time in defending by all possible means. The Prussians,

meanwhile, had taken Verdun. Nevertheless, the Duke of Brunswick, who was at bottom very cautious, and apt to be readily discouraged, began to perceive how egregiously the emigrants had deceived him as to the disposition of the French population; and knowing the unprovided state of his army, he proposed to pause, or even to retreat, and postpone the march to Paris until the following spring. The season was advancing, and a winter campaign could not possibly be sustained. These views were extremely unpalatable to the king of Prussia and the emigrants, who were flushed with the easy conquest of Longwy and Verdun, and more than ever eager to consummate their long-promised triumph. But Brunswick checked this ardour, and insisted upon waiting for the Austrian reinforcements. Thus indecision and tardiness grew to be characteristic of the allies, who, from lack of magazines, could not keep the field long, yet hesitated to make a bold plunge forward, which might have conducted them to their goal. Without knowing the distracted counsels of his adversaries, Dumouriez was confident in the strength of his position, and wrote in high spirits to Servan, the minister of war. 'We have taken post at the Thermopylæ of France,' he said; 'but we shall be more fortunate than Leonidas.'

Now that the threatened peril had come, that the legions of an imperious enemy were on her soil, and capturing its defences, a mighty thrill vibrated through the heart of France. It was not of fear, but of indignation and ardour to meet and repel the foe. The vile populace of Paris alone, fit only for the part of cowardly assassins, was seized with consternation; and in the madness of its panic, was ripe for the commission of any atrocities. The Commune had usurped all power; and that power, again, was delegated to its committee of *surveillance*, composed of seven members, whose names will be ever devoted to execration. They were Marat, Panis, Sergent, Duplain, Lefort, Jourdeuil, and Lenfant. Robespierre, with his usual cunning, kept in the background, and allowed others to incur the odium and hazards of performing acts of which he was to reap the profit. Marat was ready with his plan for saving the country. 'Give me 300,000 heads,' he said; 'hang at their doors all the bankers, bakers, and grocers, and I will answer for the salvation of the country.' But Danton, who ruled this committee as he did the Executive Council, and Manuel, the procurator of the Commune, propounded more practical measures. The operation of the extraordinary tribunal, created for the condemnation of the 'conspirators of the 10th August,' was alleged to be too tardy, and it had had the extraordinary boldness to acquit an individual arraigned before it—namely, M. de Montmorin, late governor of Fontainebleau, charged with the vague offence of treason against the people. This was sufficient to warrant resort to quicker and more decisive expedients.

In the first place, it was deemed essential that every enemy of the Revolution should be apprehended and incarcerated. With this view it was determined that domiciliary visits should be made throughout all the quarters of Paris in quest of priests and aristocrats; which latter denomination had now a very wide signification, including all who were *suspected* of being inimical to the events of the 20th June and the 10th August. Danton procured the necessary decree from the intimidated Assembly in his capacity of minister of justice. These visits were to be continued during forty-eight hours; and all that time the barriers were to be closed, so that no one might leave the city; the Seine guarded, to prevent escape by water; the tocsin sounded; business suspended; and all citizens to remain within their own houses on pain of immediate arrest. The terror which overspread Paris at the annunciation of this measure, produced a species of stupefaction, and the streets were deserted as if swept by a pestilence. None could feel himself secure against denunciation, for private malice mingled its shafts to swell the lists of the proscribed. Its execution was signalised by all the horrors inseparable from a tyrannical violation of domestic sanctuaries and legal safeguards. Municipal officers, accompanied by armed brigands, visited each house in succession, ransacked it from top to bottom, penetrated into every crevice where victims might be concealed, or proofs of criminality found, seized whom and what they pleased, and amidst shrieks and lamentations from disconsolate relatives, tore from their families fathers, sons, mothers, even daughters, and sent them to be examined before the grand inquisitors sitting at the Hotel de Ville. These, overcome by wine or fatigue, were stretched on benches, and lazily questioned the various groups as they were brought before them, ordering them indiscriminately to the different prisons, which, numerous and capacious as they were, had been already filled to suffocation by the previous labours of the committee of *surveillance*.

Danton was at this moment the dictator of Paris, and through Paris, of France. The Girondins, who could insult a fallen king with great show of bravery, quailed at his very presence. The glare of his eye, and the thunder of his voice, overawed them into the timidity of children. All the furious energies of his character were roused to the highest pitch. When thus stimulated, he was insensible to every emotion of pity, doubt, or fear. Adopting the sanguinary theory of Marat, he believed, or affected to believe, that whilst the patriots proceeded to oppose the enemy on the frontiers, the royalists and aristocrats were prepared to burst their prison gates, overrun Paris, and slaughter all who were left within it. Rumours were industriously circulated to this effect, and gained ready credence among fanatical hordes, always eager to spill blood. 'Patriots!' it was said, 'you are

about to start for the defence of the country against foreign enemies, but you leave thousands of domestic enemies behind you, who, in your absence, will rise and kill your wives and children. Before you move, you must get rid of these implacable foes.' It was not to the true patriots—the federalist volunteers, who were flocking from all parts of France to assist in repulsing Brunswick and his army—that such language was addressed, but to the well-known murderers of the faubourgs, and to the remnant of the ferocious Marseillois. On the 1st of September, the report of the investment of Verdun reached Paris, and of its inevitable capture by the Prussians. The Commune immediately issued a proclamation, exhorting the citizens to fly to arms, ordering alarm-guns to be fired, the tocsin to be rung, the barriers to be closed, the suspected to be disarmed, and commanding a muster of 60,000 men the following day on the Champ de Mars. This proclamation was a mere feint, intended to diffuse alarm, and create a panic, under favour of which deeds might be perpetrated that would otherwise have met with interruption. Swayed by the like influence, Danton easily induced the Assembly to invest the Executive Council with absolute authority, and to confer upon it the powers of life and death. This Council he looked upon with some reason as a nonentity—as the obedient servitor of his behests; and accordingly, without even convoking it, took upon himself its united functions, and proceeded to put in force the decree of the Assembly, as if expressed in his single name. The committee of the Commune was the more congenial body, in concert with which he prepared his terrible measures. They were all determined upon during the night of the 1st-2d September. Preliminary arrangements had been made, in contemplation of a massacre, for the removal of the bodies of the slain, and their interment in pits and quarries slaked with quicklime. Manuel certainly, Pétion probably,* had superintended

* Ferrieres, vol. iii. p. 221, directly accuses Pétion of co-operation with Manuel in setting out the graves of the intended victims; but by other authorities he is not implicated. As mayor of Paris, Pétion must have been cognisant of what was going on, as well as of what was in meditation; and his passive acquiescence alone suffices to stamp him with the guilt of participation. As on the 20th June and the 10th August, he willingly abdicated his functions, to keep himself free from perils to which a courageous execution of his duty would have doubtless exposed him. Thiers, adopting the portrait of Madame Roland, whose judgment of men is of no value, since it is solely directed by her personal and party predilections, labours to extol Pétion, and invest him with a character of sternness and integrity, but adduces no evidence which can support such a reputation. It is true that afterwards, when he could no longer temporise, he joined the ranks of the Girondins, and shared their proscription; but the avowed enmity of Robespierre had already left him no alternative. At the same time, the good faith of M. Thiers as a historian may be judged from the fact of his studiously suppressing all mention of Pétion's brutal conduct to the royal family during the journey from Varennes. Proof, moreover, is superabundant that he acted throughout as the servile tool of the usurping Commune, even to appearing in its deputations to the Assembly; another fact which Thiers takes care to say nothing about.

and forwarded these preparations, their practical manipulation having been left to Maillard, already known as the leader of the army of women in their march to Versailles on the 5th October 1789. It remained, therefore, only to fix the time, and appoint the instruments, to commence the work of destruction. At noon on Sunday the 2d September the signal was given. The tocsin was sounded from the Hotel de Ville; alarm-guns were fired from the quays and bridges of the Seine. The appointed gangs began to muster, whilst all Paris was in a tumult of agitation, the citizens congregating with anxiety and dismay in the streets and public places. This moment was selected to despatch from the Hotel de Ville twenty-four priests, who had been detained there, in carriages to the prison of the Abbaye. These the assassins failed not to encounter, as had been evidently provided and designed. The sight was sufficient to whet their appetite for blood. With imprecations against them as enemies of the people, and conspirators against their lives, they tore them from the coaches, and in the outer court of the Abbaye butchered the whole of them with pikes and sabres, sparing only the Abbé Sicard, founder of the institution for the deaf and dumb in Paris, who was rescued by the extraordinary intrepidity of a man called Monot, an obscure watchmaker. This was but the stimulus to more extended carnage, and they rushed straightway to the Carmelite convent, where upwards of 200 priests were confined, waiting for passports to leave the country. It is a striking proof of the animosity the French clergy had excited, that they were the first to be sought as objects of vengeance or apprehension. Maillard brandished his reeking sword, and led on the horde of murderers. The priests, who foreboded their doom, had assembled in the church of the convent to engage in prayer, and administer to each other religious consolation. Disturbed from this solemn exercise by their guards, they were made to descend into the garden, which opened from the church by a flight of steps. Here they divided into two parties: about thirty of them, with the Archbishop of Arles and two bishops, entered a small chapel or oratory at its extremity, whilst the rest dispersed through the garden, and attempted to conceal themselves behind the trees and shrubs. No opposition was offered by the gendarmes on guard to the irruption of the assassins. They advanced first to the chapel, and demanded with loud shouts the Archbishop of Arles. That venerable ecclesiastic disclosed himself, and was instantly pierced with numerous wounds. He fell, expiring on the ground; and one of his assailants, standing over him with a suspended pike, exclaimed, 'Wretch! you caused the blood of the patriots of Arles to flow; it is now your own turn,' uttering which words he transfixed him in the breast with his weapon. The slaughter then became indiscriminate. The two bishops (of

Beauvais and Saintes) and their companions had retired within the railing of the altar, round which they knelt. In this posture, body to body, their eyes abased, their clasped hands upraised, volleys of musketry were discharged amongst them, and nearly all of them killed. This work accomplished, the fugitives in the garden next claimed attention. From the accidents of the ground, these afforded their pursuers all the sport of an animated chase. Some climbed up trees, some crouched beneath bushes, some ran from covert to covert, some scaled the wall of the enclosure. The occupation of shooting them in their various attempts at concealment or flight was viewed as an exhilarating pastime, and prosecuted amidst peals of laughter. Yet the game was too agile, or the marksmen inexpert, for after half an hour's firing, only forty bodies were stretched upon the ground, stiff in death, or writhing in its convulsions. At this time a man, speaking as with authority, addressed his fellow-murderers. 'Friends and patriots,' he said, 'it is not thus we must execute our business: this is an awkward and slow process: do as I shall tell you.' He then ordered that the surviving priests should be again driven into the church, which was immediately done, by dint of blows from pikestaffs and the blunt edge of swords. When thus collected within the building, they were led out two by two, and deliberately consigned to the hands of executioners, who stood to despatch them at the foot of the stairs. The Bishop of Saintes, having had his leg broken by a musket ball, was carried out by two assassins, and held in their arms until his throat was cut, and his head severed from his body. When few remained to be sacrificed, the great door of the church was opened, and the multitude admitted from the street, with the view of giving to the atrocity a colour of popular participation; but those that entered, so far from approving the carnage, were struck with horror at the spectacle, and interposed to save the lives of the small remnant yet unmurdered. A few of the priests thus escaped; and it was rendered manifest, that the people generally were wholly unconscious of the crimes committed in their name—a signal evidence at once of the premeditation with which they were planned, and of the ease with which a few hundred organised brigands may overawe and paralyse an immense population!

It was now eight o'clock; the affair at the Carmelites had occupied three hours. The assassins were fatigued and exhausted; they demanded refreshments. Maillard conducted them to the section of the Quatre-Nations, vociferating, *Wine, or death!* He appeared before the committee of that section, and said to it, 'I come to ask wine for the brave labourers who are delivering the nation from its enemies.' The committee did not venture to refuse his request, and ordered the distribution of twenty-four pints. The liquor was carried to the court of the Abbaye, where

it was consumed amidst the corpses of the priests murdered a few hours previously. Then Maillard, pointing to the walls of the prison, exclaimed, 'My friends, there is work for us within!' At this signal, a rush was immediately made upon the gates, which, being unguarded, were forced without difficulty. The prisoners had been forewarned of the fate awaiting them. The unfortunate Swiss who had escaped death on the 10th August were among the number. They were the first selected as victims. A mock tribunal was formed, of which Maillard was constituted president. Some of the assassins were nominated jurymen, and acted alternately in both capacities. The Swiss, trembling with fear—for brave men will tremble with the knife of the butcher at their throats—were led before these wretches. They threw themselves on their knees, and implored for mercy. 'Gentlemen,' Maillard said to them with a malignant smile, 'pray take courage; you are only going to be removed to La Force.' This was a phrase that had been agreed upon, signifying sentence of death. The prisoners were not deceived by it; they saw too plainly through the grated wicket the gleaming of swords, and the ferocious countenances of the attendant murderers. They hesitated, and looked with shuddering agony on the terrible avenue they were to traverse. One of the jurymen, growing impatient at this delay, shouted out, 'Come, you must go; therefore proceed at once.' Still they shrunk back, pressed close together, and recoiled from the fatal doorway. A Marsillois advanced, as if to reproach them with cowardice. 'Let us see, then,' he exclaimed, 'who is the bravest among you, who will be the first to lead the way!' At these words a young man stepped forward. 'I will be the first,' he cried; 'show me the way! Farewell, my comrades! I give you the example.' The wicket was thrown open; a circle of pikes was pointed to receive him; he bared his breast, and threw himself upon them. Groans and dismal wailings burst from his desolate comrades; but they followed one by one, and met a more cruel and lingering death; for the assassins in the background protested against the monopoly of those in the van, and insisted that they should have a fair share of the carnage; consequently, they formed into two lines, and the last of them could inflict his wound on bodies gored and mutilated, but still palpitating.

After the Swiss had been despatched, the register of the prison was consulted, and all incarcerated on the charge of forging assignats were ordered to be brought before the tribunal. The turnkeys continued in the performance of their functions, and pointed out the rooms and cells in which the various classes of prisoners were confined. The accused forgers were arraigned in a body, and with one voice asserted their innocence. But their crime, whether real or supposititious, was regarded as one

of the most heinous against the Revolution; for it had been largely practised by the emigrants on the frontier, and thus rendered inexpiable in the eyes of the people. They were accordingly not listened to; and the president sharply vociferated, '*To La Force!—to La Force!*' They were immediately delivered to the executioners outside, and hacked to pieces. Montmorin, who had been already acquitted by the tribunal of the 10th August, but nevertheless detained by the express command of Danton, was next led forth and butchered amidst howls of savage exultation. Thus it fared with several others in succession, after undergoing interrogatories in which the terror and confusion natural to such a situation were taken as undeniable evidences of guilt. The barbarians of civilised life have not the redeeming impulses of man in his wild untutored state. When they master society, they revenge themselves as its outcasts, and their hearts are steeled, because they have known only its oppression and its vices; its advantages and its virtues have been to them alike forbidden and untaught. Yet in this, the most horrible mood in which such barbarians ever revelled—drunk with wine, maddened with their debauch of blood, inflamed with the passions of demons—chords of tenderness could be touched, and latent throbs of humanity awakened. An old man, seventy-three years of age, named Cazotte, who had been dragged from a peaceful retreat in Champagne, and thrown into the Abbaye, accompanied by an only daughter, was placed in his turn before the tribunal, and sentenced, like the rest, to *La Force*. His venerable aspect, his artless and almost witless mind, his tottering frame, provoked only indecent merriment; but suddenly, as he advanced to the gate of doom, a shriek was heard, and in an instant his daughter had clasped him in her arms. Standing between him and the assassins, her long hair hanging dishevelled upon her shoulders, her beautiful features pale with agitation, she laid bare her bosom, and exclaimed, 'It is only through my heart you shall reach my father!' Her heroism, her youth, yet more her beauty, fired some of the ardent sons of the south, and they raised the cry of pardon, which was caught up and repeated by the crowd, mingled with shouts of *Vive la Nation!* The Marseillois surrounded her and her father as their especial saviours, and escorted them through the ranks of the murderers, and over the bodies of the slain, to a place of safety; the insensate mob filling the air with acclamations. A more difficult triumph was achieved by another female. Sombreuil, the veteran ex-governor of the Invalides, was already in the hands of the executioners, when his daughter rushed through the forest of pikes and swords, folded him in her arms, and implored for mercy in such thrilling accents, that first the uplifted weapons were dropped, and then—oh, marvellous to be said!—tears stood in haggard eyes, and

flowed down scared and gory cheeks. How admirable the witchery of woman!—how irresistible her grace and softness! Sombreuil was saved to the accustomed cheers of *Vive la Nation!* But a fearful ordeal was yet exacted from his noble daughter. Her fortitude and filial love were tried by an unheard-of test. ‘Come, then,’ said one of the assassins, ashamed perhaps of the sensibility she had wrought; ‘if you are a good citizen, drink the blood of aristocrats;’ and he held to her a goblet full of blood. She put it to her lips, and the pardon of her father was sealed. Some of the horde conducted him to his residence with songs of joy, and refused the recompenses he would have gratefully given them; the rest brushed away their tears, grasped again their weapons, and prepared to immolate fresh victims.

Thus wore through this fatal night, one uninterrupted scene of slaughter. In the morning, Billaud-Varennés, deputy-procureur of the Commune, who had on the previous evening openly extolled the massacre of the priests, appeared in the court of the Abbaye, and addressed the assembled murderers. ‘Citizens,’ he said, ‘you have destroyed a pack of scoundrels, and have saved the country. All France owes you eternal gratitude; the municipality knows not how to reward you. The spoils of these villains (pointing to the bodies of the killed) belong naturally to those who have delivered us from them; but I am deputed to offer each of you, in addition, twenty-four livres (a pound sterling), which will be paid to you immediately. Good citizens, continue your work, and you will deserve well of the country.’ Vociferous applause greeted this encouraging speech. Billaud referred his hearers to the committee of the section of the Quatre-Nations for payment of their promised wages. Thither they resorted in a body, and by their threatening clamour, struck terror into the committee, who possessed no funds to satisfy their demands. This assurance failed, however, to pacify them; and they brandished their arms with menacing gestures, making the members of the committee quake for their lives. ‘What’s twenty-four livres?’ cried one of the ringleaders. ‘I have earned more than that; I have killed upwards of forty with my own hands!’ Still no money was forthcoming; already the ominous shout was raised—*Money, or death!* when one of the committee had the wit to suggest that the requisite funds had doubtless been provided at the municipality. The unwelcome claimants were thus diverted to that quarter; and they repaired to the Hotel de Ville, where they found the sitting committee in the same destitution as that of the Quatre-Nations. At this intimation, their fury broke beyond all bounds; they threatened the members of the committee with instant death, unless their just dues were paid. One of the committee offered to bring all the

money he had in his house, and he was allowed to go and fetch it. The other members contributed what they had on their persons; and being promised that the Commune would discharge the remainder, the assassins reluctantly consented to accept the intermediate instalment. In truth, the Commune afterwards acquitted the obligation contracted in its name; and its registers contain the record of sundry heavy items disbursed on account of the massacres of September.

The Abbaye was only one of the prisons of Paris. Gangs of murderers were assigned to all the others—La Force, the Conciergerie, the Chatelet, the Bernardins, La Salpetriere, St Firmin, and Bicêtre; at the whole of which the work of extermination had commenced before daybreak of the 3d. At St Firmin, priests alone were confined; and they being held approved malignants, no form of trial was used with regard to them, but they were at once slaughtered. At the other prisons, counterfeit tribunals were instituted on the model of Maillard's, and the victims put through a summary process of interrogation. Presence of mind, and frankness of speech, nevertheless, sometimes availed to extort verdicts of acquittal; and in such cases the murderers embraced, with their bloody arms, the persons whom, the moment previously, they were panting to destroy. At La Force, two municipal officers in their scarfs presided over the tribunal. In this prison a great number of females had been immured, twenty-four of whom had been released by commissioners from the Commune before the massacres commenced. Several, however, were left, with the probable intention that they should perish. Of these, the most distinguished was the Princess de Lamballe, who was related to the royal family, and particularly attached to the queen. On that account alone she stood but a slender chance of escape. She was not molested during the night of the 2d, but passed it in sleepless terror, with the shrieks of the murdered ringing in her ears. About ten in the morning of the 3d, she was summoned to descend, for the purpose of being sent, as she was told, to the Abbaye. Almost unable to stand, she begged to be permitted to remain where she was; but the messengers answered that her life depended on her removal. She rose, and hastily throwing around her a loose robe, was supported to the turnkey's room, in which the tribunal sat. At the spectacle that here met her eyes, she sank to the ground in a swoon. And sufficiently horrible it was to appal the most callous heart. The disguise affected at the Abbaye was not observed here. The executioners stood around the table with their weapons in their hands, their arms bared to the elbows, their clothes saturated with blood, awaiting the sentences of the court to seize the doomed. When the princess had sufficiently recovered, she was placed amidst these monsters in front of the presidents. The

names of the latter were Hebert and L'Huillier. They rudely inquired who she was, and what she knew of the plots of the court on the 10th of August. She denied all knowledge of any plots. 'Swear, then, to love liberty and equality, and to hate the king, the queen, and royalty,' they said to her. 'I will take the first part of the oath,' she replied, 'but the latter I cannot; it is not in my heart.' 'Let the lady be liberated!' Hebert exclaimed, that being the signal of death at La Force. Tottering, and almost insensible, she was led to the passage, where death was administered. Two men held her under the arms, and bore her over the mangled corpses which strewed the way. It is said that if she had cried *Vive la Nation!* she would have been saved; but the power of speech was lost to her, even had it been so. She could only articulate some faint expression of horror as the field of carnage was revealed to her; and closing her eyes, happily became unconscious. As she emerged from the threshold, she received a sabre-cut on the back of the neck, which caused the blood to gush forth in a stream. She quivered, and then gave no signs of life. Her guides flung her on a heap of dead bodies, and what vitality still remained was quickly expelled by the thrusts of pikes. A numerous crowd of spectators beset the gates; for as the news of the massacres spread, the idle, the prurient, and the vicious flocked to the scenes, as to some captivating spectacle. Women formed the greater number, and as murders became familiarised in their sight, they began to enjoy them, and soon took part in their perpetration. It was, however, chiefly in mutilating corpses that they indulged their savage humours. That of the Princess de Lamballe was treated in the most revolting manner. It was stripped naked, and after the grossest indignities practised on it, literally torn in pieces. One of her legs was thrust into a cannon, and fired into the air. Her head was cut off, her heart torn out, and both elevated on the ends of pikes. The dismembered trunk was attached to ropes, and dragged through the streets. Numerous women accompanied it, displaying as trophies the lesser fragments of the arms, the feet, and the hands.

The murder of the Princess de Lamballe recalled to memory the illustrious captives of the Temple, who seemed to have been forgotten up to that moment. A detachment of the assassins employed at La Force now moved towards their prison, bearing aloft the head and heart of the princess, and followed by a tumultuous rabble. The king and his family were at dinner when they heard the uproar caused by their arrival. They rose from table in great alarm; but the municipal officers on guard over them maintained a dogged silence, and refused to satisfy their anxious inquiries. The outer gate meanwhile was besieged by the multitude, who demanded admittance and access into the interior

of the Temple, to lay the head of Lamballe, as the ringleaders expressed it, *at the foot of the throne*. Certain commissioners of the Commune, who had been deputed to protect the asylum of the national hostages—for such Louis and his family were denominated—parleyed with the assailants, and agreed to admit them into the court and garden of the tower, on their promising to penetrate no farther. Such a promise was of course purely derisory; and it is certain that the lives of the royal family were abandoned to the mercy or discretion of these murderers. ‘Resistance,’ the commissioners had already resolved amongst themselves, ‘would be impolitic, dangerous, perhaps unjust.’* And in fact, the muskets of the National Guards on duty had been purposely unloaded, and their bayonets taken from them. Therefore no material obstacle opposed the assassins; the way was made smooth before them: but they had undoubtedly secret instructions, and pretended to respect a tricoloured ribbon which the municipal officers hung across the great door of the tower, in accordance with a stale device which furnished orators with the theme of much lively bombast. They insisted, however, that the king and queen should show themselves at the windows, that they might see the head of the princess, and ‘learn the fate that was in store for the enemies of the people.’ They called upon them with dreadful imprecations to appear, especially upon the queen, whom they reviled with the most opprobrious epithets. Finding that their interpellations were not regarded—for the officers with the king, happening to be men of some humanity, kept him and the queen from going to the window—they asserted the royal family had been removed from the Temple, and claimed that a deputation of their number should be permitted to enter, and verify the fact. To this demand the commissioners were fain to accede, and four of the ruffians were taken into the room in which the royal family were assembled. One of them, more forward than the rest, was urgent that the king and queen should show themselves; but the municipal officers positively refused to allow them; whereupon he turned to the queen, and said to her, ‘It is Lamballe’s head they want to keep you from seeing, but I advise you to show yourself, if you would not have the avengers come up here.’ On hearing these words, the queen immediately fainted. The king advanced to the wretch, and rebuked him with sternness. ‘We are prepared, sir, for everything,’ he observed to him; ‘but you might have spared the queen the relation of this horrible disaster.’ The deputation then hastily withdrew, and guaranteed to the mob outside that the hostages were at all events safe within their dungeons; but for several hours gangs of miscreants continued

* This expression is used in their letter to the National Assembly, dated at the Temple, and recorded in the proceedings of the latter body in its sitting of the 3d September 1792.

around the prison, bellowing with fearful howls, beating with furious discordance loud-resonant drums, and renewing every moment the dread of a violent irruption. It was eight in the evening before tranquillity was restored in the neighbourhood of the Temple, and the royal captives left to snatch some repose after the cruel agitations of the day.

This was a mere bye-interlude in the great drama of action. The main plot was not interrupted or postponed by it for a single instant. Its commencement, its development, its catastrophe, was still death. For five successive days, in the glare of sunlight and in the gloom of midnight, the slaughter of human beings was the only occupation pursued in Paris. It was invested with all the attributes of a regular calling. The wives and daughters of the murderers carried to them their meals, as when engaged at ordinary work, and liberal wages were awarded them by the sympathising Commune. Although the scenes at all the prisons were sufficiently deplorable, that enacted at the Bicêtre surpassed the rest in the elements of enormity. This was both a prison and an hospital, and contained the most abandoned characters of both sexes—malefactors of every hue and grade, and patients afflicted with the most loathsome diseases. The number of its inmates when their massacre commenced is estimated at 5000 by the lowest computation. The usual weapons were used for a time; but it was found that, upon so large an aggregate, they did but slow execution. Moreover, the able-bodied criminals attempted to defend themselves, and severe scuffles took place, in which the murderers were sometimes worsted. It was accordingly resolved to employ cannon to consummate the work of destruction. The prisoners were driven into courts by swords and firearms, and there mowed down by canister shot. Those that escaped the volleys of artillery were picked off with rifles. Nearly all were thus slain; but some few took refuge in subterranean vaults, where, from the darkness, it was difficult to distinguish them. The vaults were therefore filled with water, and they were drowned. The carnage continued longest at Bicêtre, but by Friday afternoon it was left in silent desolation, and the commissioners of the Commune were enabled to declare at the bar of the Assembly, ‘The prisons are empty!’*

* The number of victims actually immolated in the massacres of September can never be precisely known; it has been variously computed at from 7000 to 15,000. The slaughter, however, was not confined to Paris, since, in accordance with a circular issued to the various municipalities of France by the committee of *surveillance*, and signed by all its seven members under the title of *Administrators of the Public Safety*, the example was followed in several towns, and the prisoners put to death. The number, therefore, must have been very considerable throughout France; but the circumstances themselves were involved in obscurity at the time, and subsequent revelations have only partially removed the veil. As a proof of the eagerness with which the public sought to learn details that were so variously reported, 200,000 copies of a

Now, during all this time there was a Legislative Assembly sitting in permanence, composed of men who had taken countless oaths *to die, or live free*; there was an Executive Council, a mayor of Paris, a National Guard of 40,000 men; and were all these silent and inactive before a handful of brigands, sullyng by their crimes the very name of the country they boasted to be regenerated? It is too true. Not absolutely silent and inactive, for the Assembly, stricken with terror as it was, deputed some of its members to harangue and expostulate with the murderers; but they were treated with derision, and warned to look to their own safety. It called upon the Commune, too, to make reports upon the state of the capital, which was simply a blind to conceal its own impotence. Of the Executive Council, Roland was the only member who displayed any courage or energy. He sent a message to the Assembly, denouncing the crimes in perpetration; and as minister of the interior, he summoned, by positive mandates, Pétion the mayor, and Santerre the commander of the National Guard, to perform their duties, and restore order. Pétion pretended to be detained by force at his house; although it is alleged by his advocates that he really visited one or two of the prisons, and attempted to stop the massacres; but beyond that, he certainly remained passive. Santerre replied in the vague bombastic style characteristic of the time, vowed he was prepared to make a buckler of his body in defence of innocence, and was content with that intimation of his magnanimity, making no effort to collect even a single company of the force under his command. Roland nearly fell a victim to the boldness of which he gave the only example, as Marat and his colleagues issued a warrant for his arrest, which would have been executed, but for the interference of Danton, who thought it a step savouring too much of the extravagant. This opinion, however, excited the ire of Marat, and occasioned a violent altercation between him and Danton, which threatened to end in a confirmed rupture; but their mutual friends succeeded in effecting a reconciliation, which was sealed by the two patriots embracing, and protesting a reciprocal admiration and esteem.

Previous to the 10th of August, a court had been established at Orleans for the trial of prisoners charged with offences relative to the Revolution. Fifty-three of these were still confined at Orleans, and the Assembly, on the demand of the Commune, had decreed their removal to Paris. Danton had hastened to put this

wretched egotistical production, entitled 'My Agony of Thirty-eight Hours,' written by one St Meard—who, by dint of assurance, had obtained his liberation by the tribunal at the Abbaye—were sold within a few days. It may be observed that all the memoirs, with one or two exceptions, left by actors in the French Revolution are marked by a degree of egotism which would be deemed quite astounding on the part of any but French authors, who naturally partake the great national characteristic.

decree in force, and sent a detachment of the Parisian National Guard under Fournier to escort the prisoners from Orleans to Paris. Meanwhile, sinister-looking knaves, bearing the identity of brigands, began to congregate in Versailles, through which they had to pass, so as to attract the notice of a judicial officer named Alquier, who, from reports current of an intended assassination, and his own awakened apprehensions, conceived fears for their safety, and repaired to Paris to communicate them to the minister of justice. The conversation that ensued between them affords a curious illustration of Danton's character, and of his determined ferocity when the innate flame was kindled. Alquier stated the motive of his journey. Danton, knitting his eyebrows, replied to him, 'But these men are great criminals.' 'That may be,' Alquier rejoined; 'but it is for the law to pronounce.' 'I tell you these men are great criminals,' Danton repeated in a loud and stern tone. 'I grant it; but that is not the question,' urged Alquier; 'the danger is pressing—there is not a moment to lose; what will you do?' 'Sir,' exclaimed Danton in a terrible voice, 'do you not see that if I had any answer to give you, I would have given it long ago? What have you to do with these prisoners? Attend to your duties, and don't meddle with this business;' saying which, he turned his back upon him, and quitted the room. Alquier was not wrong in his conjectures. When the unfortunate prisoners reached Versailles, they were abandoned by the infamous Fournier; and although the mayor of that city, unlike his prototype of Paris, courageously defended them to the hazard of his own life, they were butchered on the public street, as they sat bound in the open wagons which conveyed them. Of the fifty-three, only six were spared, being servants in attendance on their masters. The Duke de Brissac, the Bishop of Mende, and Delessart, were among the victims. The assassins, whetted rather than satiated in their appetite for blood, completed the day by cutting the throats of all the prisoners confined in the prisons of Versailles, of whom several belonged to the outcast and proscribed class of priests, apprehended for the purpose of being ejected from the country.

The battle-field has its horrors, for the spectacle of human carnage must be always harrowing to the sensibilities. But there, at least, man stands to man; defends or takes life according to his ability; and by skill or might, may influence great destinies. There are displayed combinations of art, of strategy, of movements, complex yet concatenated, which require judgment, sagacity, precision, and other high powers of the mind, that raise the reputation of a successful warrior, and invest him with a glory which moralists vainly strive to decry. Unpleasant, therefore, as it may be to visit, it is surely preferable to scenes of brutal and cowardly assassination, in which not a redeeming feature exists to relieve

the bare iniquity. When, too, it is a field on which a nation struggles for its independence against superior odds, it enlists the sympathies, and possesses a peculiar interest. Such a one there was at this moment in Champagne; for although the government of France had passed into the hands of a populace who illustrated its reign by plunder and murder, yet still she had a national existence to contend for, and the very supremacy of that mob was chiefly owing to the invasion and threats of the enemy who sought to extinguish it. Dumouriez, with the principal French army, had taken post at the camp of Grandpré, commanding the main pass of the Argonne. His position was impregnable, if his troops could be relied on, and effectually barred the advance of the allies, unless they contrived to turn it by forcing one of the other passes. That of the Islettes, which led direct from Verdun, just taken by the Prussians, to St Menchould, and thence to Chalons and Paris, was of the greatest importance, and its defence was intrusted to Dillon, who had with him 8000 men. It was to be expected the Prussians would endeavour, at any cost, to carry this avenue, if they intended to proceed to Paris; and Dumouriez wrote urgently for reinforcements, demanding them both from the army of Flanders and the army of the East, stationed at Metz, under Kellermann. The allies, concentrating their forces to penetrate into Champagne, left the other armies almost without an enemy before them, and rendered them therefore in a great measure disposable. Orders were consequently given to Beurnonville to join Dumouriez with 10,000 men from the camp of Maulde, and to Kellermann to join him with the whole army of Metz, amounting to 18,000 men, by way of Ligny and Bar-le-Duc. Beurnonville was under the command of Dumouriez, and therefore subject to his orders, which prescribed him to be at Rethel on the 13th September at the latest; Kellermann held an independent command, and not appreciating the dispositions of Dumouriez, was reluctant to combine with him. No general was perhaps ever placed in a situation of such extraordinary difficulty as Dumouriez. With the reinforcements he had received from the interior, all raw and insubordinate recruits, he had a force of upwards of 30,000 men, of whom 20,000 were in the camp of Grandpré, and some 12,000 distributed in the passes of the Argonne. Three armies threatened him on different points: General Clairfayt, with 20,000 Austrians, was advancing from Stenay; 22,000 Germans and emigrants, with the Counts de Provence and D'Artois at their head, were at Dun and Buzancy: and 50,000 Prussians, under Brunswick and Frederick-William, were between Verdun and Clermont. To resist such a mass of enemies seemed hopeless. The Parisians were in utter consternation, and clamoured to have the capital covered, not being able to understand that Dumouriez, seated on the skirts of a forest seventy leagues from Paris, could afford them any pro-

tection. The position he had chosen with such consummate judgment, enabling him, with his inferior force, to keep the enemy in check, and spin out the war until he could no longer keep the field, was universally condemned, and he himself denounced as a manifest traitor. Even his friends thought him swayed by a fatal obstinacy; and the exhortations of the minister at war only echoed the general sentiment, that he should retire on Chalons, and concentrate all his troops in front of that barrier to Paris. All the last contingents of volunteers were stopped, some being detained in the camp formed below Paris, and others mustered before Chalons under the command of Labourdonnaye, afterwards resented into Flanders, and replaced by Sparre. In these positions they could be of no use whatever; nor, from their disorganisation, could they have impeded the progress of the Prussians for an hour; but the brawlers of the Jacobin Club saw no safety but in them, as men imbued with the true revolutionary spirit, and inveighed against disciplined soldiers as the tools of treacherous generals. Thus, as Dumouriez himself says, the French themselves were more formidable adversaries to him than the combined Prussians and Austrians. The very officers of his staff mutinied, and came to him in a body, insisting that he should break up the camp of Grandpré, which they alleged to be both untenable and unhealthy, and retire behind the Marne. He silenced them by his firm demeanour; but it was true that his troops were suffering from dysentery, and also from the want of provisions; nevertheless, he had so completely gained their confidence and affections, that they bore their sufferings and privations with exemplary patience, and manifested the utmost ardour to engage the enemy.

Such was the situation of the respective armies, when, by an oversight of Dumouriez, all his plans were deranged, and the success of the allies rendered apparently certain. Engrossed by multifarious cares, he had omitted to visit in person the small pass of La Croix-aux-Bois, which traversed the forest of Argonne a little to the north of the larger avenue of Grandpré. He had intrusted its defence to an experienced officer, who, having served with some distinction in America, he judged worthy of his confidence. He had ordered him to destroy the road from the entrance of the forest, by cutting in it deep trenches and pits, to throw up intrenchments, and form barricades of felled trees in the centre; and behind these to resist any assault the enemy might be able to make; which, from the road being rendered impracticable to cavalry and artillery, he supposed could not be very formidable. Through some unaccountable fatality, this officer wholly neglected the execution of his orders, although he reported he had strictly fulfilled them, and even asserted the defences to be so impregnable, that Dumouriez was induced to

withdraw from the pass all but 100 men. Naturally anxious to concentrate the greatest force he could on the important post of Grandpré, he was led to commit, by false representations doubtless, this egregious blunder. It nearly proved fatal to him. On the 13th September, Clairfayt sent into La Croix-aux-Bois a detachment under the Prince de Ligne, which found no difficulty in dislodging the hundred French left to defend it, and took possession of the pass. The instant Dumouriez was apprised of this disaster, he detached General Chazot with a strong body of grenadiers, cavalry, and artillery, to attack the Austrians before they had time to intrench themselves, and drive them back. In this Chazot succeeded; slew the Prince de Ligne; and regained possession of the pass. But the Austrians returned in greater strength; expelled Chazot in his turn; and made him retreat to Vouziers, where he was cut off from Dumouriez. At the same time, the emigrants entered the more distant defile of Le Chêne Populeux, defended by General Dubouquet, who repulsed them with considerable loss. But learning the fall of La Croix-aux-Bois, whereby he was exposed to be taken in the rear by Clairfayt, he decamped during the night, and proceeded by the route of Attigny and Somme-Peris to Chalons. Dumouriez was now in the greatest danger. He was both turned and dominated in his position of Grandpré, and it behoved him to get out of it as quickly as possible, otherwise he was irremediably ruined. This was an operation, however, attended with infinite hazard; for if the Austrians attacked him during its performance, he must fight at a tremendous disadvantage. Fortunately, the state of the weather, and the uncertainties distracting his enemy, aided him in his emergency. The rain fell in torrents, and from the misrepresentations of the emigrants, it was the more easy to deceive the allied commanders. From overweening confidence in the nullity of the resistance they were to encounter, these had passed to exaggerated apprehensions of its magnitude, and were perplexed by contradictions they could not reconcile. Prince Hohenlohe, commanding the imperial vanguard, sought an interview with Dumouriez, which the latter thought fit to decline; but sent in his place Duval, an old gray-headed officer of imposing aspect. As truth is not more respected in war than in diplomacy, Duval scrupled not to throw dust in the eyes of Prince Hohenlohe, and tell him that, on the following day, Dumouriez would be joined by Beurnonville with 18,000 men, and by Kellermann with 30,000, when he would assuredly give battle. The prince was amazed, and declared the emigrants had asserted that the French had neither generals nor soldiers; but Duval assured him, on the contrary, they were amply provided with both. He retired from the conference, to make preparations for repelling an attack on the morrow: that same night Dumouriez stole

away; and before the mist had dispersed in the morning, and his flight was discovered, he had taken post on the heights of Autry with the bulk of his army, in condition to protect the retreat of his rearguard. Hohenlohe sent 1500 hussars in pursuit, accompanied by three or four pieces of flying artillery, who, coming up with this rearguard, began to harass it considerably. Dumouriez, considering his retreat secure, had proceeded forward to mark out a camp for the army to occupy on its first march. Suddenly, fugitives rushed past him, crying out—'*All is lost! The army is put to flight!*' He rode back with all speed, and found, in fact, that his troops had disbanded, and were flying in all directions. The occasion of this panic was Chazot's division, which had moved from Vouziers during the night to rejoin the main army, arriving later than it ought, and in such confusion at sight of hostile cavalry, that it burst into the midst of the marching columns, and threw them into disorder. Seeing this confusion, the hussars charged with impetuosity, and in a few moments put the French completely to rout. Two thousand of their horse scampered across the country to Rheims and Chalons—distances of thirty and forty leagues—giving out everywhere that the army had been betrayed; that it was utterly destroyed; and that Dumouriez, and all the generals, had gone over to the enemy. These reports travelled to Paris, and made its blood-stained patriots quake with direful forebodings. But although 10,000 men had fled before 1500, Dumouriez's lieutenants, Duval, Stengel, and Miranda, succeeded in rallying a sufficient number to repulse the hussars, who were not supported; and the bulk of the army was again collected under its standards. On the 17th, Dumouriez continued his retreat in three columns, and in the course of that day entered the camp of St Menchould, the object of his destination, after executing a movement under circumstances of extraordinary difficulty, which has few parallels in military annals.

The firmness and fortitude of Dumouriez are strikingly exemplified in this crisis, which seemed so desperate. Neither the bitter consciousness of his blunder, nor the outcries of the demagogues, nor the increased perils of his situation, shook his mind or affected his resolution. He was still determined to stick to the Argonne; and if the enemy ventured to leave him behind, and march on Chalons, he would attack him in the rear. At the news of his reverse, Beurnonville had retired on Chalons; supposing, from the tales of the fugitives, that the wrecks of the army would take refuge there: and Kellermann had fallen back on Vitry. He despatched urgent orders to both to effect an immediate junction. Beurnonville obeyed with alacrity, and on the 19th, marched into the camp of St Menchould, just in time to avoid being intercepted; for the allies crossed the Bionne on the following day, and established

themselves on the eminences of La Lune. The Prussians had passed through the defile of Grandpré, and debouched beyond the Aisne, so that the whole allied force was now concentrated in Champagne. The Austrian Hulans scoured the country even to Rheims, and spread consternation to the gates of Paris. Nothing could be more singular, in truth, than the relative situations of the invaders and defenders of France. Each was intercepted in his direct communications; and the former were in advance of the latter, standing between them and the capital. Yet Dumouriez never doubted his ultimate success; being prepared, as he conceived, for any alternative the allies might adopt—whether they advanced onwards, attacked him, or remained inactive; and when everybody else viewed him as irredeemably lost, the victim of perverseness and infatuation, he wrote to Servan, minister at war: ‘I answer for all. I will beat the Prussians, and pass my winter quarters at Brussels;’ a boast that appeared so truly extravagant, that it almost suggested the idea of madness; and yet he realised it to the letter! He had, in fact, a thorough appreciation of the dilemma in which the allies were entangled. He knew their condition to be deplorable. They had to bring their supplies from Verdun, where they had captured some magazines, and from Luxumbourg, by long and devious routes through the defile of Grandpré, and across Champagne, to their position of La Lune. The roads had become almost impassable from the constant rains; their convoys were attacked by the garrison of Montmedy and the peasants; and these supplies became every day more precarious. The country before them had been already exhausted by Dumouriez, and they were unable to procure even water, which is scanty and unwholesome in great part of Champagne. Disease was sure to follow in the train of want, and a frightful dysentery soon raged among them, which they had no means to mitigate—since they were without conveniences for hospitals, or even proper medicaments, and their bivouacs were in the midst of swamps. It was incumbent on them, therefore, to adopt some decisive line of conduct, for by inaction they would rot and perish. Brunswick was in favour of a retreat; but the king of Prussia, and the French princes, were not yet sufficiently tamed to listen to the counsels of prudence, and they scorned to retrograde as ignominious. Were they not at least 80,000 strong, and could they not scatter to the winds the contemptible musters of assassins at Chalons, Soissons, and Paris; march to the rescue of the king, reinstate him on his throne, and terminate the Revolution? Yes; but there were 60,000 men in their rear, who would not fail to interfere with the execution of this fine project; and these must, it was impossible to deny, be first disposed of. Yet an attack on them was difficult and perilous, for they were posted advantageously; and failure would entail

the certain ruin of the allied army. It was, however, determined to risk the attempt; and a favourable opportunity seemed shortly to present itself. Kellermann was not the lieutenant, but the colleague of Dumouriez; and hence arose all the evils of a divided command. When at length, on the 19th, he came within two leagues of the camp of St Menehould, he either declined to follow, or misunderstood the directions of Dumouriez, who had requested him to intrench himself behind the Aube; and if any indications of an attack were given by the enemy, to occupy the heights of Valmy and Gizaucourt. But instead of halting on the Aube, he crossed it, and proceeded straightway to the hill of Valmy, neglecting that of Gizaucourt altogether, and ranged his artillery and 15,000 men on its plateau, where they were inconveniently crowded. Brunswick, with the eye of a veteran, immediately discerned both his error and his omission, and all the chances of annihilating him that they offered. Already seated on the heights of La Lune, he sent to seize those also of Gizaucourt, both dominating the lower eminence of Valmy. His preparations were completed on the morning of the 20th, and he opened a cannonade from each of his positions on Kellermann, who briskly returned it. Dumouriez, meanwhile, was not inattentive to the danger of his colleague. He prepared to support him with all his disposable forces. He detached General Chazot with a strong body to flank the position of Valmy on the left, and General Stengel to flank it on the right; placing Beurnonville in the rear of the latter, with his right supported by Leveneur, who was directed to outflank and turn the left of the enemy. By these dispositions, he deterred Brunswick from attempting to scale the hill of Valmy, and storm the French intrenchments, lest he should be himself charged in flank whilst engaged in the operation. Twice during the day he formed in columns to assail and envelop Kellermann, but each time he hesitated to risk the enterprise, intimidated by the determined manner in which the French soldiers stood to receive him. Whether or not those inexperienced recruits would really have stood firm, and crossed bayonets with the Prussian veterans, is doubtful; but they were at least animated with enthusiasm, and eagerly responded to their general, as he pointed to the enemy, and cried, *Vive la Patrie!* It is sufficient to say that the Prussian commander thought it prudent to relinquish his design, and the affair resolved itself into a simple cannonade, which cost the lives of some 800 men, on both sides uselessly sacrificed. But insignificant as this action of Valmy really was, it had all the effect of a decisive victory. It was a check to the Prussians in an actual engagement, and it gave a wonderful stimulus to the courage and confidence of the French soldiers, who no longer dreaded to meet their redoubtable adversaries. It changed the moral complexion of the two

armies; and, through policy extolled by the French generals as a mighty achievement, it quickened that military ardour in France which led to such stupendous results.

If, before testing the metal of Dumouriez and his troops, the Duke of Brunswick had recoiled from the desperate course of plunging on Chalons and Paris, he was by experience doubly confirmed in the apprehension of its proving disastrous. The object of the campaign was clearly frustrated. The only hope of turning it to any profit, seemed to consist in seducing Dumouriez to embrace the cause of the king. Colonel Manstein, adjutant-general to the king of Prussia, was sent to him for the ostensible purpose of negotiating an exchange of prisoners, but with the real view of sounding him. This envoy expressed to Dumouriez the high esteem in which he was held in the Prussian camp, and proceeded to declare that it depended on him to finish the war; that if he would undertake to put an end to the disorders of France, every assistance would be given him, and that he might dictate his own terms. Dumouriez had no fixed principles, and would probably have rather served one royal master than a hydra of demagogues; but he had committed himself to a career from which he could not at this juncture swerve, had he been ever so much inclined. Yet the propositions were pleasing to his versatile and ambitious mind, and he dallied with them until Manstein pressed for an explicit avowal; then he assumed the dignity of offended virtue. 'Colonel,' he said, 'you have told me I am esteemed in the Prussian army; I will not believe it, if you continue to urge things which would disgrace me. I wish to testify my respect for the king of Prussia; I desire to cultivate your friendship; let us, therefore, speak no more of such propositions.' Manstein ceased to importune him, but their interview ended in a convention for the suspension of hostilities in front of the two camps. This was agreed to on the 22d. Dumouriez no longer doubted that the Prussians meditated a retreat. He hastened to make dispositions for harassing it, and now called into service the muster of volunteers at Chalons, whom he directed on the routes proper to incommode their march, and intercept their convoys. He sent off detachments, likewise, from his own army for similar purposes. The situation of the allies was becoming hourly more distressing, for the tempestuous weather abated not, and their men were perishing by thousands of cold, wet, famine, and disease. Nevertheless, on the 28th, Brunswick sent to Dumouriez a manifesto, which, under the circumstances, was extravagantly misplaced. It referred to his previous productions of the same class; reiterated the determination of the emperor and the king of Prussia to insist on the restoration of Louis XVI. to his authority; and announced that, unless submission were made accordingly, the suspension of hos-

tilities was at an end. Dumouriez observed to the officer who brought him this strange document, 'The Duke of Brunswick doubtless takes me for a Dutch burgomaster; but tell him that I declare the truce broken in your presence.' Two days afterwards, the Duke of Brunswick had commenced that famous retreat which at the time puzzled all Europe, and has since exposed him to such bitter reproaches and maledictions. The army of Frederick the Great—the proud chivalry of France led by two descendants of Henry IV., whose name was perpetually on their lips—the warlike legions of the Holy Roman Empire, in flight before the untrained bands which had been derided in all the terms of contumely! It was a strange result unquestionably, and so contrary to all expectation, that ingenuity has been racked to discover causes other than the true ones which provoked it; but they are sufficiently evident when sought in the spirit of candid inquiry.* To crown the singularities of this extraordinary campaign, the allies were left to retrace their steps almost without molestation; whereas, if they had been vigorously pursued—hampered as they were with sick, impeded by bad roads, and engaged in long defiles—they might have been cut off almost to a man. But Dumouriez was full of his scheme on Belgium, and in a hurry to get to Flanders; whither he at once detached Beurnonville with 25,000 men, under pretence of raising the siege of Lille, prosecuted by Duke Albert of Saxe-Teschen, thus materially weakening the army which was to follow the Prussians. The task of doing so he intrusted to Kellermann, Dillon, and Chazot; who, acting without concert, and apparently without zeal, marched sluggishly in the wake of the retreating allies, and did little more than pick up their dead and dying, who strewed their passage in multitudes. Brunswick evacuated Verdun and Longwy, the only fortresses he had captured; and finally quitted the French territory towards the end of October, hastening to check the progress of Custine, who, having been detached from the army of the Rhine under Biron, had taken Frankfort, levied a heavy contribution on it, and menaced Coblenz with the same fate. The emigrants, upbraided as the authors of the whole calamity, were ordered to disband, and retire from the confines of the German empire. Clairfayt posted with all speed to Belgium, foreboding a storm in that quarter. Thus ended the first

* It has been asserted that Louis XVI. wrote to the king of Prussia, beseeching him to retire out of France, as the only means of saving his life; a stupid and ridiculous fabrication. It has also been alleged, and Ferrieres for one is ready with all the particulars of the covenant (vol. iii. p. 251), that it was expressly agreed the allies should not be harassed in their retreat; in consideration of which they were to surrender Verdun and Longwy. It was impossible for them to retain possession of those fortresses; and if any such agreement had existed, Dumouriez must have been too glad to adduce it as a vindication of his military fame: it is inconsistent, moreover, with Brunswick's last manifesto.

attempt of allied Europe to subdue the French Revolution, and to uphold the damaged cause of royalty. It gave to the first a strength and stability which it never otherwise could have attained; to the second, a blow from which it yet staggers, and can never recover.

Whilst the terror of the Prussian invasion was yet at its height, the National Convention had superseded the Legislative Assembly, and met, on the 21st of September, in the palace of the Tuileries. Its members had been chosen under the influence of the frightful days of September, and included many of the principal actors in them. The return from Paris presented a curious array of names: Robespierre, Danton, Marat, Manuel, Legendre, Panis, Sergent, Billaud-Varennes, Camille-Desmoulins, and Philip Egalité, under which levelling designation the Duke of Orleans hoped to eke pardon for being born a prince and a Bourbon. The number of deputies was the same as in the Legislative Assembly—745; and the majority of them had belonged to the latter, since on this occasion no self-denying ordinance prevented re-elections. Not more than half of them had reached Paris when the Convention opened its session; yet on the very first day, Pétion having been chosen president, Manuel moved that royalty be abolished in France, and a republic established in its stead. It was objected that so important a question ought not to be decided until all the representatives of the nation were present, nor until after mature deliberation. ‘What need have you of discussion?’ exclaimed Gregoire, a constitutional bishop; ‘kings are in the moral world what monsters are in the physical. The history of kings is the martyrology of nations. As we are convinced of this truth, why debate?’ And it was accordingly held that there was no room to debate. Amid unanimous acclamations, the president pronounced the abolition of royalty, and the conversion of France into a republic. Precipitation had been the bane of the Constituent Assembly, when honest and enlightened men essayed to use the shears of reform; it could not fail to characterise a body swayed by the impatient passions of an irreflective populace. The aim was still to rear the pinnacle of the edifice before the foundation-stone had been laid. France was declared a republic before a single clause of the constitution appropriate to such a form of government was framed; and in the interim, the reins of power were left to be grasped by the boldest and the strongest. Three competitors were in the lists to struggle for this supremacy—the Convention, the Commune, and the Jacobin Club. In the first, the Girondins continued to possess a numerical majority, and their party was strengthened by the ostensible adhesion of Pétion, who, in joining them, however, took care to maintain his relations with the Commune and the Jacobin Club, and who, being more identified with the worst deeds of the Revolution, enjoyed a

popularity which made him respected by the demagogical leaders, and which he in some measure imparted to his new allies. But the two latter were wholly in the hands of their adversaries, who consequently had means of action at their command on the decisive point where they had always proved so efficacious. These adversaries ranged themselves on the left side of the Convention, that being always occupied by the opponents of the existing order of things, and being perched on the higher benches, obtained the appellation of the *Mountain*—a name applied in derision, but perpetuated by a terrible reminiscence. Between the Girondins and the Mountain sat a large number of deputies, who affected to be impartial, and who, in fact, when not under the direct influence of fear, generally inclined to the side of moderation and reason. They were called the *Plain*, and subsequently, in contempt, the *Belly*, when they devolved into the passive instruments of tyranny. In theory, the differences dividing the Girondins and Jacobins were not very broadly or even distinctly marked. They both professed to be republicans, although many of the former were doubtless reluctant converts in their faith, and sailed with a current they could not hope to stem. Republicanism itself, however, has many shades, embracing every variety of structure, from an oligarchical despotism to a pure democracy; and hence they might dissent in their views as to the quality and nature of the republic to be established. Yet it was not exactly so. Save that the Girondins dreamt of a republic in which virtue and talent should exercise their legitimate sway, both parties were agreed that it should be based on the widest principle of equality, on the most extended significance of the phrase, ‘sovereignty of the people;’ that every species of qualification to office or function—possessory, professional, or pecuniary—should be abrogated; and that every trace of distinctions should be swept away, except such as were conferred by the citizens themselves. The differences, therefore, were extraneous to merely elementary opinions, and sprung from personal rivalries and animosities, which arrayed them in bitter and implacable antagonism. Thus the meritoriousness of the 10th August was universally admitted, and it was a matter of emulation to arrogate its honours; whilst the massacres of September were viewed in opposite lights: the Girondins denouncing them as diabolical atrocities; the Jacobins palliating them as necessary by way of precaution, and as the act of an indignant population, whose will was not to be resisted. Hence it was on the manner in which this population should be allowed to interfere in the government of the country, and on the spirit which should actuate such government, that they were radically at variance. The Girondins held that the people delegated the sovereignty to their representatives, assembled in a National Convention, which thereby became the supreme power in the State; the Jacobins

maintained that the people retained the right of controlling their representatives when they erred—meaning by the people the populace of Paris, through whom they expected to rule. The former, moreover, were of opinion that the republic could be consolidated with mildness and moderation; the latter advocated the necessity of persecution, and the relentless punishment of foes. The common danger to which the Prussian invasion exposed them, restrained their mutual hatred for a time; but when relieved from fears on that account, they gave free scope to the passions which animated them. Each party was ready with its string of accusations. As the Girondins were returned exclusively from the departments, it was natural they should be favourable to their exercising a fair share of that influence over the course of the Revolution which had been hitherto so completely usurped by the city of Paris; and it was accordingly easy to fasten on them a charge of designing to convert France into a federative republic, such as that of Switzerland or the United States of America, and to destroy its unity and indivisibility, of which the Jacobins proclaimed themselves the resolute champions. The Girondins, on the other hand, accused the Jacobins of aiming to establish a tyranny, in the form either of a triumvirate or of a dictatorship. These charges were equally extravagant, according to the custom of factions, which reciprocate aggravated imputations with the view of throwing greater odium on each other. The Girondins did not contemplate a federative republic, for such a thing was impossible; but they desired that the Convention should be secured from popular aggressions, and that, for such purpose, it should have a guard drawn from the departments—a scheme opposed by the Jacobins with all their force, but at first vainly. In like manner, the Jacobins had not then any idea of an individual despotism, which many events were required to render feasible.* Nevertheless, these formed the staples of their respective criminations. In the strife that ensued between them, the Girondins fought on unequal terms with the Jacobins. Eloquence, honesty, and talents they had undoubtedly on their side, added to the generous boldness which detestation of crime and calumny inspires; but had even such qualifications been sufficient to contend against adversaries unscrupulous in the use of means, they lacked the essential requisites of tact and discretion. Taunted and irritated by reproaches of federalism, they were betrayed into the egregious error of making two formal denunciations against Robespierre, as meditating a tyranny and dictatorship. It is possible that, in the dark recesses

* M. Guadet, a relative of the deputy, in his 'Recherches sur les Girondins,' prefixed to his publication of Buzot's Memoirs, p. 79, concludes that individually they were favourable to a federal constitution, and that Vergniaud had even proposed it to Louis XVI.; but they never propounded it as a serious scheme. So also the Jacobins proposed to *tyrannise*—that is, to exercise domination by foul means or fair; but such is the common design of every party association.

of his mind, that subtle personage had begun to nurture thoughts of grasping supreme power; but no proofs could be adduced against him, beyond the insane ravings of Marat, who advocated the appointment of a dictator, with the sole function of dispensing death, being kept to his duty by a chain round the leg; and the accusation was therefore imprudent and detrimental. Robespierre displayed great art in repelling the charge, and, carrying the war into the enemy's camp, retorted with such effect, that the Convention ultimately passed to the order of the day, having first decreed the penalty of death against all who should propose the institution of a dictatorship, or any measure militating against the unity and indivisibility of the republic. The result was a signal triumph to Robespierre, attracted to him a number of timid waverers, strengthened his power prodigiously, and tended to endear him still more to the masses, who believed him assailed because he vindicated their rights, and proclaimed him, with increased ardour, the veritable and incorruptible patriot.

In such vain and inglorious contentions did the National Convention waste its time, and the Girondins destroy the prestige of their moral superiority. The Convention had been convoked for two especial objects—to frame a new constitution for France, and to decide the fate of the king. The first was necessarily a work of protracted labour, which was thrown on a committee of nine, curiously enough compounded, embracing the discordant characters of Sieyes, Tom Paine, Pétion, and Danton; the second was one of summary disposal, as it proved, and Louis XVI. had been deposed without a word being said in his behalf. Still it remained to dispose of his person, and opinions were far from uniform how this was best to be done. The subject was debated in numerous sittings during the month of November. The analogy between him and Charles I. was sufficiently striking to suggest a similar process of arraignment; and it was flattering to the vanity and gratifying to the malice of legislators who had so recently emerged from the inferior grades of the old society, to sit in judgment upon a monarch at whose name they had once trembled. Hence, among the members of the Convention, the conclusion was very general that Louis ought to be brought to trial, whatever might be its issue. But some few there were who carried their foresight into futurity, and quoted this very instance of Charles I. to show that the surest way to resuscitate royalty was to wreak vengeance on its fallen representative. These, therefore, proposed that Louis should either be set at liberty, and left to mingle with the herd of the citizens, or be removed with his family out of the country, since forbearance could no longer be attributed to pusillanimity or fear of Brunswick's threats, but must be deemed pure magnanimity, so well becoming a great and liberated nation like France. Such moderation, however, was not suited to the temper

of boiling patriots, who longed to kill a king for the mere satisfaction of the deed, and by way of bravado to kings in general, whom they stigmatised as the enemies of the human race; and these also contended against a trial as superfluous, affirming that Louis's guilt admitted of no question, and that immediate death was his just and expiatory doom. Robespierre and St Just were the organs of this doctrine in the Convention, and the former upheld it in an elaborate argument. 'Louis does not stand,' he said, 'in the condition of one impeached, neither are you judges; you are, and can only be, statesmen and representatives of the nation; you have no sentence to pronounce for or against any man; you have a measure of public safety to pursue, an act of national providence to perform. If Louis can be considered an object for trial, he may be acquitted, he may even be innocent, nay, must be presumed to be so until his trial is concluded; but if this Louis can for a moment be deemed innocent, what is to be thought of the Revolution? The vindicators of liberty, then, are calumniators and rebels; the patriots throughout France are loaded with guilt; every moment of imprisonment that Louis has suffered is to be accounted an unjust, vexatious, and wicked outrage. When once a nation has been driven to have recourse to the rights of insurrection, it is instantly to be considered as in a state of nature with respect to the tyrant who has caused it.' He noticed the guarantee of inviolability secured to Louis by the constitution, which had been invoked by previous speakers, and he dismissed it as already broken and annulled. 'The constitution is appealed to!' he exclaimed; 'why, the constitution is in direct opposition to all you have done against Louis. What greater right had you to depose him without a trial than to condemn him without one?' He concluded with a motion that Louis be proclaimed a traitor to the French nation, and an offender against human nature; and that he suffer death, as a great example to the world, on the spot where the brave martyrs to liberty fell on the glorious 10th of August. This speech of Robespierre was received with considerable applause, and no one attempted to confute its positions; but nevertheless, the short and abrupt process he recommended was distasteful to the majority of the Assembly, who in reality hoped to save the life of Louis, by giving him the chances of a lengthened trial. Yet Robespierre was urgent, and had gained many partisans to his opinion; moreover, he had external appliances to back it; and he might have caused it to prevail, but that a peculiar circumstance promised to afford him greater scope to his malignity, by having the king subjected to an interrogatory; and he consequently withdrew his opposition. The Convention had referred to two or three committees the task of raking up evidence against Louis XVI., to prove the criminality alleged against him; but they had met with so little success, that the dilemma was to

be feared of their being unable to present testimony sufficient, not to substantiate, but to render colourable the intended impeachment, whereby the trial must degenerate into a mere mockery. The discovery of a concealed press in a passage of the Tuileries, containing a variety of secret and important papers, came opportunely to their aid. In this press, so celebrated as the *Iron Press*—being made of that metal—the unfortunate Louis had deposited documents connected with the Revolution which he was loath to destroy, but which he was conscious might be used to his detriment, if he fell into the calamity actually impending over him. Only one person besides himself knew of its existence, and that was the artisan who had made it, the infamous Gamin, who had been the companion of his recreations in smith-work, and in whom he placed entire confidence. This man betrayed the secret to Roland, who lost no time in ransacking the press of its contents, and carrying them with exultation to the Assembly. A committee of twelve was appointed to investigate them, and in the meantime, rumours were spread of the extraordinary disclosures made by them touching the relations with the court of sundry chief revolutionists, including members of both the first and the second Assemblies, not excepting the Girondins themselves; and the occasion was eagerly seized to cast opprobrium in anticipation of the revelations to be elicited.

The report of the committee was presented on the 5th December. The main question had been already decided by previous reports from committees and resolutions of the Convention, wherein, after lengthy preambles, it was declared that Louis XVI. might, in spite of any pretended inviolability, be tried, and that he ought to be so tried and judged by the National Convention. It was therefore only necessary to determine the precise charges on which he should be arraigned, and the form and time of the process. An anxious stillness marked the reading of the report on the papers found in the Iron Press, for many were present who might fear to be implicated by it, and more were there who hoped to find in its disclosures weapons of offence against hated adversaries. The Girondins, however, were not mentioned; which so galled Robespierre and the Mountain, that they instantly charged Roland, who had committed the indiscretion of going alone to rifle the chest, with having suppressed all documents tending to criminate his friends. The charge was untrue, but was not the less believed on that account; and in the mouths of malignant foes, became a formidable topic of clamour. Suffice it was educes, notwithstanding, to satisfy the cravings even of an inordinate rancour. Letters and accounts of Laporte, treasurer of the civil list, unveiled the system of bribery pursued to gain partisans among deputies, mob orators, and frequenters of the galleries, to influence public opinion both at Paris and in the departments, and to

direct elections, of which Bertrand de Molleville was the ingenious contriver. The plans of counter-revolution projected by Bouillé and Mirabeau, the schemes of Lafayette and Dumouriez, were all exposed, with the correspondence of the king respecting them. The foreign communications, too, were detected with the emigrant princes, and with emissaries to foreign courts. The original letter to the Bishop of Clermont, upon the case of conscience which distressed Louis in April 1791, was produced, in which strong expressions of remorse, and avowals of restorative intentions if he ever recovered his power, were recorded by the royal penitent. Upon the whole, ample materials seemed at last collected to found an indictment of conspiracy against the Revolution, and of crimes thereupon attendant; so the committee of twelve was ordered forthwith to take three members from each of the committees of twenty-four, of legislation and of general safety, and, in concert with them, to frame the act of impeachment against *Louis Capet*, and the series of questions to be put to him when subjected to examination. Monday the 10th December was fixed for these documents to be presented, when they were to be discussed by the Assembly, and copies afterwards delivered to Louis, who should be summoned to appear at the bar of the Convention on the second day thereafter. The executive power was specially charged to preserve public tranquillity during the continuance of the trial of the *last king*.

Louis had now been confined in the narrow and gloomy recesses of the Temple for four months. His weary and harsh imprisonment he had borne with that remarkable serenity which so distinguished him under calamity. If a plea may be advanced for the massacres of September, and they have had their apologists, the barbarity of Louis's confinement can admit of no palliation. The Legislative Assembly, obedient to the commands of the conquerors of the 10th August, had consigned his person to the care of the insurrectionary Commune, and from that time had given no further heed to him or his family. Thus abandoned to the mercy of men whose base natures were pregnant only with brutality, the wretched monarch, his wife, sister, and children, underwent rigours, vexations, and persecutions, which, being unnecessary to their safe custody, marked emphatically the vile character of their jailors. The prison in which they were immured was a high square tower, flanked by two turrets, in one of which was a winding staircase leading to a terrace on the top. In each storey of the tower were three rooms, one being simply the size of the turret, and very small. The first storey was occupied by guards and municipal officers; the second by the queen, the princesses, and the dauphin; the third by the king and the faithful Cléry, the only attendant left to wait on the whole family after the removal of Hue, who was carried off on the 2d September, and

narrowly escaped the murders of that period. A municipal officer was constantly on guard in each of the upper storeys: during the day, he sat in the same room with the prisoners, and by his presence, prevented them from holding confidential intercourse, a restraint they found of all others the most irksome and galling: during the night, one lay at the door of the king's room, with his bed in sight; the other watched over the queen in like manner, but had the decency to allow the door to be closed. The life led by the prisoners was pretty uniform, except when disturbed by the caprice of municipals with a larger share of vulgar arrogance than was even usual with their fellows. The king rose at six, dressed, and retired to pray and read in the turret chamber, which was provided with a small library, the eyes of the officer following him in all his movements. Meanwhile, Cléry made his bed, put the room in order, and prepared breakfast; after which he descended to the queen's apartment, where he found her and the dauphin ready dressed, and assisted to finish the toilet of the three princesses by combing out their hair. They then went up, and partook of breakfast with the king, during which interval Cléry made all right below, and at ten the prisoners came down to the queen's room, in which they passed the rest of the day. Louis employed his time in the education of his son; the queen in that of her daughter. They were allowed to walk in the garden for an hour; but the privilege was dearly purchased, and regard for the dauphin's health alone induced them to embrace it. They had to pass through the guard-room of the soldiers, who planted chairs in the way, sat down upon them, puffed tobacco smoke into the faces of the princesses, and indulged in the low ribaldry common to persons of that class.* In these walks they were still accompanied by municipal officers, and the strictest measures taken to prevent communications from without. They would have been left in total ignorance of what was passing but for an ingenious device of Cléry, who contrived to glean intelligence from a hawker of newspapers, who planted himself every evening beneath the walls of the tower, and bawled out their contents. This information he whispered to the king whilst pretending to adjust his curtains after he had got into bed; but often the jealous vigilance of the municipal on duty rendered it dangerous, and he was obliged to impart his news to one of the princesses on the following day by some stratagem which necessity is so active to suggest. As the Commune, in order to keep up the popular outcry against Louis and the queen, always affected to suspect them of being in correspondence with the

* 'One of the soldiers on guard within the tower wrote one day on the king's chamber door, and that on the inside, "The guillotine is permanent, and ready for the tyrant Louis XVI." The king read the words, which I made an attempt to rub out, but his majesty prevented me.'—*Cléry's Journal*, p. 168.

foreign enemy, the emigrants and the royalists in Paris, and of being engaged in weaving conspiracies against the Revolution, it ordered daily minute searches of all the apartments occupied by the royal family, and eventually deprived them of writing materials, as well as of all sharp instruments—such as razors, knives, scissors, and needles—which was a severe privation to the princesses, who beguiled the sad hours of captivity by working tapestry. These searches were usually made by Santerre at the head of his staff, and were often conducted with the greatest violence and indecorum. But at times, the municipal officers took upon themselves to institute them, and not unfrequently in the middle of the night, when they had been carousing, and were inflamed with liquor. Hue mentions that ‘one morning, while the king was dressing, the municipal went up to him and demanded to search him. Without evincing any anger or impatience, his majesty took out the contents of his pockets and laid them on the chimney. After this scene, the king ordered me never again to give him his clothes without turning the pockets inside out.’ Again he relates that, on the 24th August, ‘several municipals entered the king’s chamber between twelve and one in the morning. Awakened by the noise, I got up as fast as I could, and saw them approach his majesty’s bed. “In execution of a decree of the Commune,” said one of them, “we are come to search your chamber, and take away whatever arms may be found in it.” “I have none,” replied the king. They searched notwithstanding, but found nothing. “This will not do,” said they; “you had a sword when you came into the Temple; give up that.” His majesty ordered me to bring his sword. To assist, however involuntarily, in disarming my sovereign, was a shocking thought to me. I gave the sword into the king’s hand. “Gentlemen,” he said, “I deposit it with you. The more this sacrifice costs me, the more it proves my love of the public peace.”’*

It was not until after the Convention had sat six weeks, that it thought fit to concern itself about the treatment Louis received in his prison. On the 1st November, it nominated a deputation to visit him, in which were included Drouet, the postmaster of St Menchould, who had been the cause of the arrest at Varennes, and Chabot, who, from being a monk, had turned a furious denouncer of all religion. ‘The royal family, and particularly the queen,’ says Cléry, ‘shuddered with horror at the sight of Drouet, who insolently seated himself by her. Chabot, following his example, also took a chair. They asked the king how he was

* Hue’s Narrative, pp. 126, 129. ‘Once as Madame Elizabeth was mending the king’s coat, having no scissors, she bit off the thread with her teeth. “What a reverse!” said the king, looking tenderly on her; “you were in want of nothing at your pretty house of Montreuil.” “Ah! brother,” she replied, “can I feel a regret of any kind when I share your misfortunes?”’—*Cléry’s Journal*, p. 206.

treated, and if he was supplied with necessaries. "I complain of nothing," his majesty replied; "and only request that the committee will supply my valet-de-chambre with 2000 livres, or leave that sum with the council, to defray the small current expenses; and that we may have some linen and other clothes, of which we are in the greatest need." The deputies promised it should be attended to; but nothing was sent.' Louis had repeatedly made the same request to Pétion, who had regarded them with the indifference that was to be expected from his character. In proportion as the question of the king's trial and punishment began to be seriously agitated, the obnoxious superintendence of his keepers was redoubled. He was removed to another tower of the same building, and separated from his family; but at the passionate intreaties of the princesses, they were permitted to take their meals with him, and after some time, were removed to a room above his, where the dauphin was placed with his father as a companion. In this new situation, Cléry had no means of gaining information except through his wife, who was allowed to visit him at stated intervals, and who, although a municipal officer was always present at their interviews, nevertheless contrived to give him intelligent hints of what was passing. Thus from her he had tidings of the decree for the king's trial before the Convention, and of the intention to separate him from his family whilst it was pending. Louis had expressly requested him to communicate whatever he might learn, as he wished to be prepared for the worst. With a bleeding heart, Cléry told him the news as he left him for the night, intimating, moreover, that only four days remained to concert with the queen some mode of corresponding with her. On the following day, her expressive grief showed him that the king had imparted to her the fatal secret. At night the king took the opportunity of saying to him, 'Continue your endeavours to find out what they are going to do with me, and don't be afraid of giving me pain.' The affectionate valet assured him of his devotion, and proved it sufficiently by planning with the Princess Elizabeth expedients for maintaining a correspondence during the trial, which exposed him to the greatest danger. As he was to be shut up with the king, and kept in the same complete isolation, the princess said to him, with tears streaming from her eyes, 'You, Cléry, will now be the only person with my brother; redouble, if possible, your attentions to him, and omit no opportunity of giving us intelligence respecting him; but on no other account expose yourself, for then we should have nobody on whom we could rely.'

The 11th December had been finally fixed for Louis's appearance at the bar of the Convention. On the morning of that day, the beating of drums, the clashing of arms, and the tramping of horses, gave token to the captives of the Temple that the terrible

hour of separation had arrived. They had breakfasted together as usual in the queen's room, with hearts oppressed by present anguish and the gloomiest forebodings. Yet they dared not give expression to their feelings; for they must not betray a knowledge of the conventional decree, lest they should compromise Cléry, and fortify the suspicions of their having means of external communication, which would have led to increased severities. They were obliged to part, therefore, in silence; the grief depicted in their looks they were denied the consolation of relieving by tears and embraces. The king descended with the dauphin to his own apartment, and whilst engaged in hearing him read, was interrupted by two municipal officers, who intimated to him that, by order of the Commune, his son was to be taken from him, and delivered into the charge of his mother. He asked the reason; but the officers replied they had simply to execute their instructions, and could give him none. In great affliction, he tenderly embraced the child, and consigned him to Cléry, that he might conduct him to the queen. He then sat down at the head of his bed, and remained absorbed in thought, until disturbed by the officer on guard over him, who was alarmed by the dead stillness prevailing in the room, and entered it to ascertain the cause. The king took his hand from his brow, and said with some sternness, 'What do you want with me?' The officer replied, 'I was afraid you were ill.' 'I am obliged to you,' Louis answered; 'but the manner in which they have taken my son from me cuts me to the heart.' The officer withdrew, for he was affected by the tone in which the king spoke. At one o'clock, Chambon, the new mayor of Paris, accompanied by Chaumette, the successor of Manuel as procureur of the Commune, several municipal officers, and Santerre with his aides-de-camp, entered the room, and apprised the king that they were come to convey him to the bar of the Convention, by virtue of a decree which the secretary would read to him. In the decree he was called *Louis Capet*. 'Capet,' he said, 'is not my name; it is that of one of my ancestors.' He subsequently added, 'I could have wished, sir, that my son had been left with me during the two hours I have passed alone; but such treatment is of a piece with all I have met here during these four months. I am ready to follow you; not in obedience to the Convention, but because my enemies have the power in their hands.' The mayor led the way, and he followed. At the gate a carriage was in waiting to receive him. It was escorted by 1200 men, infantry and cavalry, and several pieces of cannon both before and behind. The National Guards lined the streets, which were filled with a vast multitude, who gazed on the procession with stupid wonder, and gave no outward signs of feeling. Louis surveyed the scene with calmness, and on his arrival at the palace, was ushered into a committee-room, to await

the pleasure of the Assembly, which had, through so strange a series of events, become the arbiter of his fate.

Meanwhile, that august body was disputing in what manner it should receive the fallen monarch, the better to overawe the mind, and impress him with a sense of the dignity of his judges. Legendre the butcher shouted out, 'Let us scare him by the silence of the grave!' Others were in favour of a more active demonstration, and the galleries warmly responded to that opinion. Manuel thought it would compromise the majesty of the nation if the Convention appeared to be exclusively occupied with Louis and his trial, so he proposed that the question on the order of the day should be discussed, to show the noble indifference taught by the Roman senate towards captive or suppliant kings. This conceit tickled the vanity of the Assembly, and it straightway commenced to debate on a law relative to emigrants, when at length Chambon and Santerre appeared at the bar, and announced that Louis was waiting to be admitted. Barrère, an artful trimmer as yet between the Girondins and the Mountain, was president. Addressing his colleagues, and particularly the citizens in the galleries, he exhorted them to assume the attitude of impassibility befitting people on whom the eyes of all Europe were fixed, and to remember the awful stillness which marked the return from Varennes, the precursor of national judgments upon kings. When he ceased, the door was thrown open, and Louis entered, accompanied by the retinue that had attended him from the Temple. His step and demeanour were firm, and as he gazed tranquilly around him, caused in his beholders that emotion with which they had hoped to see him oppressed. The Girondins were probably stricken with remorse at the actual spectacle of the condition to which they had aided in reducing a monarch so estimable from his personal virtues, and the more so, as they had just reason to augur that their own fate was wound up in his. 'Louis,' said Barrère, 'the French nation impeaches you. You will hear read the declaration of the crimes charged against you. Louis, be seated.' A chair had been placed for his accommodation. The committee of accusation had prepared two documents: the articles of impeachment themselves, and a summary of the heads of his offences, upon the latter of which only he was now to be examined. The list of crimes commenced with the attempt against the tiers-etat on the 20th June 1789, and comprised all the charges alleged against the court since that famous era of the tennis-court oath. The Constituent Assembly, nevertheless, had amnestyed all offences relative to the Revolution committed prior to the acceptance of the constitution of 1791; yet this striking objection was left to be urged by Marat alone, who for once was heard to speak in the language of ratiocination, but was overruled by the argument, that when the people conquered on the 10th

August, all compacts between them and Louis XVI. were annulled. To the questions put upon each head of the accusation, the king replied with perfect aptness and composure, although many were calculated to disconcert and ruffle him. The last in the series alone roused him to anything like indignation. 'You are charged with causing French blood to be shed on the 10th August,' said Barrère to him; 'now, how say you?' 'It was not I,' he answered with some vehemence, 'that was the cause of its being shed.' At five o'clock his examination closed, and he was conducted back to the Temple with the same precautions by which his passage from it had been guarded. On his return, he immediately asked to see his family, which was sternly refused; instead, four municipal officers were given him as companions, to watch his minutest movements, and prevent him from enjoying the boon of solitude, that last grateful solace to minds in tribulation.

The Convention decreed that Louis XVI. should be allowed the benefit of counsel to aid him in his defence, and he chose as his advocates Target and Tronchet, both eminent pleaders before the old parliament. Target basely declined the honourable office; but his place was well supplied by the venerable Malesherbes, who hastened to volunteer his services, which were cheerfully accepted by the king. The Commune passed a resolution, that if counsel were admitted to the Temple, they should be searched and stripped in the presence of municipal officers, and be kept confined until after the trial was over. The Convention ordered, on the contrary, that the king's counsel should have free access to, and communication with, their client, to whom, moreover, it restored the use of pens, ink, and paper. It even directed that Louis should see his family under certain restrictions; but this the Commune positively refused to permit; and by a species of compromise, the Convention revoked its ordinance touching the intercourse of the royal family, and the Commune its resolution as to the admission of counsel to the tower. On the 14th December, Tronchet and Malesherbes had an interview with Louis. The meeting between him and his former minister was most affecting. Malesherbes sank on his knees, overcome by his emotions; the king yielded to the gush of recollections, raised him up, and pressed him in his arms. On the 16th, a deputation from the Convention brought copies of the articles of impeachment, and of numerous papers intended to be given in evidence, all of which were read over to the king, and left with him. A few days after, the same deputation returned with an additional packet of papers, and intimated that the trial would be resumed on the 26th December. In the interim, Louis passed a great part of each day with his counsel, who were assisted by a junior, M. Deseze, granted by the Convention on a representation that two were

insufficient to prepare the defence in so voluminous a process. Yet he felt conscious that all this labour was thrown away, entertaining a settled conviction, which nothing could shake, that his enemies had vowed his destruction, and would execute their purpose.* Accordingly, on the 25th December, he wrote his will: not to bequeath property, for he had none at his disposal, but to avow his belief in the Catholic faith, and in the saving merit of its ministrations; to acknowledge his sins, and his reliance on the mercy of God; to recommend his children to the queen, whom he assured of his unalterable attachment; to intreat the forgiveness of those he had offended; to record his own forgiveness of those who had persecuted him; and to exhort his son, if he should ever be invested with power, to bury in oblivion all remembrance of the sufferings he had endured. It was the effusion of a truly contrite and pious heart, and clothes the character of Louis with an undying brightness. At peace with his own conscience, and with all the world, he still fretted to see his family, and renewed his solicitations to that effect; but his jailors were inexorable. The anniversary of his daughter's birthday occurred on the 19th December, and he could send her a message of affection only through the cold medium of a municipal officer. The thought distracted him, and he exclaimed, with tears trickling from his eyes, 'Alas! am I then not to see my daughter on her birthday?' The officers themselves were moved, and hung down their heads in silence. To this cause of mental affliction was added physical suffering. The use of razors had been absolutely forbidden him since the commencement of the trial, and his beard had grown to a troublesome length. To relieve the irritation, he was obliged to bathe his face in cold water several times every day. He desired Cléry to procure a pair of scissors or a razor, as if for himself, not choosing to mention his distress to the municipal officers. Cléry suggested that if he were to appear as he was at the bar of the Assembly, it would at least show the barbarity of the treatment he had undergone. 'No,' Louis replied with proper dignity; 'it does not become me to adopt any step to excite commiseration.' The application for a razor was made; and the Commune, after a debate of some hours, resolved that he might be permitted to shave himself, so that a municipal officer sat on each side of him during the operation.

On the 26th, a larger body of troops was assembled to escort him to the Tuileries than even on the 11th. No less than fifty pieces of cannon, and upwards of 20,000 men under arms, were ranged on the way he had to pass. These excessive precautions

* He said to Malesherbes, who attempted to persuade him that he ran no danger, 'I am sure of the contrary; they will take my life: they have both the power and the will.' Then, after a pause, he added, 'But never mind; let us attend to my trial as if I ought to gain it; and I will gain it, if I leave my memory without stain.'—*Ferrières*, vol. iii. p. 505.

were taken to support the belief among the people that a rescue was to be attempted by the royalists; an artifice designed to stimulate their rage. The king entered the Convention, accompanied by his three counsel, and seated himself as before. Defermon, who had succeeded Barrère in the presidency, announced to him that he was now to be heard for the last time. 'My counsel will deliver my defence,' Louis calmly replied. Deseze thereupon proceeded to address the Assembly, amid a profound silence. He had arranged his arguments hastily, but they were lucid and irresistible; because, upon all the principles of equity recognised among men in society, Louis was not amenable for any of the offences charged against him. With regard to those committed before the conversion of France into a constitutional monarchy, he had infringed no law, even had he been guilty of the whole of them, and they had been of themselves crimes: with regard to those committed after that conversion, he was shielded by the doctrine of ministerial responsibility, which is of the essence of that form of government. But if the rules of equity were set at nought, those of evidence were still more contemned. Not a single witness had been examined, save the accused himself: the only proofs adduced were papers, for the most part totally unauthenticated; many trivial, and of no meaning; the rest not legally implicative of the king. Moreover, no opportunity was allowed for obtaining exculpatory evidence upon the individual charges, which in the aggregate were vulnerable to such decisive objections, and in detail open to successful refutation.* And what was the tribunal before which he was arraigned? By what right did it arrogate the power of trying him? With what regard to decency did it act as both accuser and judge? No doubt the positions of the advocate were irrefragable, and demonstrated that, as a judicial process, the trial was an empty pageant, since forms and principles were alike violated; but in truth Robespierre and St Just had shown the real question to be an issue between a triumphant people and a conquered monarch, in which might was right. The Girondins strove to dissemble this fact, and in their endeavour to throw over the fate of Louis an air of solemnity and justice, made more palpable the nakedness of the outrage upon both. Deseze concluded his speech with a brilliant peroration, which elicited no signs of sympathy from the sullen audience, and then Louis himself arose and spoke briefly. 'The particulars

* Bertrand de Molleville, then in London, forwarded sundry important documents vindicatory of the king to Garat, minister of justice, who had succeeded Danton in that office upon his election to the Convention, with a request that they might be delivered to Louis or his counsel, but which the minister delivered to the committee of accusation instead; and they, together with several others of the same description, were suppressed by order of the Convention itself.—*Bertrand's Annals*, vol. viii. p. 345.

of my defence are before you,' he said; 'I shall not repeat them. In speaking to you, perhaps for the last time, I declare that my conscience reproaches me with nothing, and that my advocates have stated only what is strictly true. I was never afraid of having my conduct publicly examined; but my heart is torn with anguish to find myself accused, in the act of impeachment, of having sought to shed the blood of the people; and, above all, that the calamitous events of the 10th of August are attributed to me. I had thought that the whole tenor of my life would have preserved me from such an imputation.' These words he pronounced with an emphasis and sensibility which made a deep impression; and the president, fearful of some outburst in his favour, abruptly asked him if he had anything further to advance in his defence; and upon his answering in the negative, directed him to withdraw. On his return to the Temple, amid the formidable array of warlike preparation, he retained the same equanimity he had manifested throughout the day, and conversed almost gaily upon indifferent topics with the mayor and officers who accompanied him in the carriage. Yet the goal was before his eyes, to which his next progress through the streets of Paris would lead him!

After he retired from the bar of the Convention, a scene ensued which is happily without parallel in the history of nations. The spectacle of his fortitude and placidity seemed to have roused the Jacobins to a transport of fury. They demanded with loud cries that an immediate vote should be taken, by a call of names, on the question of his condemnation to death. The formality of the trial was over, and the guilt of the tyrant stood out only the more prominently. No further discussion was needed; the simple point to decide was the measure of punishment. A deputy called Lanjuinais was indignant at this unseemly precipitancy; and not content with rebuking the Jacobins as avowed enemies of Louis XVI., and therefore unfit to sit as his judges, he denied the right of the Convention itself to try him, moved that the whole proceedings be annulled, and concluded, amidst frightful uproar, by declaring that he would rather die than condemn, against all law, even the worst of tyrants. '*Down with him!*' '*Send him to the Abbaye!*' the galleries vociferated. Members rushed to the tribune from all sides to answer or support Lanjuinais; they met, struggled, and imprecated; the Girondins and Mountaineers left their places, advanced into the body of the hall, defied, vituperated, threatened, belaboured each other;* roars from the galleries animated the combatants; and thus did the judges of Louis XVI. pass an hour of the afternoon. The president exerted himself to restore tranquillity; he rang his

* Ferrieres, whose authority is undeniable, and who is largely quoted by M. Thiers himself, expressly says, *On se bat à coups de poings*.—Vol. iii. p. 339.

bell, faint echo in the insurgent clash!—he put on his hat, the last potent appeal he could make to a sense of propriety and order; but all in vain. Eventually, Pétion raised his voice, when exhaustion had partially allayed the tempest. ‘Who is he that wishes for a king?’ he shouted. ‘We want none; we will have none!’ The members desisted from their several altercations, and joined in a unanimous response: ‘No, never!’ Philip Egalité waved his hat in the air, to give emphatic utterance to his protestation, and all did the like after his example. Thus, by an adroit clap-trap, the current of feeling was changed, and in comparative quiet a resolution was passed that the debate on the judgment of Louis XVI. should be deemed commenced, and be continued without intermission. The president thereafter broke up this memorable sitting.

On the following day the ebullition of passions was equally violent. Uproar and tumult characterised the sitting from its commencement. The president obtained a hearing for a moment, and reminded the Assembly, and particularly the occupiers of the galleries, that they were engaged in a species of *funeral solemnity*, which enjoined silence and decorum. This phrase pleased the Jacobins, but they did not the less continue their clamour. The president renewed his pantomimic action; he shook his tiny bell, and drew his hat over his brows in frowning attitude, but was in return assailed with menaces and maledictions. At length the majority of the Assembly arose in a body, and by gestures of reprobation, shamed the rioters to cease their disorderly conduct. To prevent the repetition of such opprobrious manifestations, it was resolved that for the future any member who created a disturbance in the Convention should be censured, and his name, so branded, be transmitted to all the departments. The debate was then opened with some degree of order and regularity. It was distinguished by the same conflict of opinions that had marked the previous discussions. The orators of the Mountain were consistent in maintaining that it was as a political body, and upon considerations of public safety alone, the Convention had to determine the fate of Louis, which fate could be none other than that awarded to traitors—immediate death. Some few members had the courage still to contest the authority of the Convention to try or judge him; others reasserted his inviolability, and, whilst confessing his guilt, deemed him exempt from its penalties; others again, also allowing his guilt, held he ought to be detained in custody until the advent of peace, or banished. The Girondins, anxious to save his life on the one hand, and fearful of perilling the remnant of their popularity on the other, were perplexed what course it behoved them to advocate. They had the imputation of royalism constantly cast in their teeth by the Mountain, and they must avoid anything tending to accredit

it. They had therefore a delicate part to play. Their embarrassment was well understood, and the Jacobins exulted over it as the sure precursor of imbecile vacillation. Nor were they deceived. The false position of the Girondins ever since the demolition of the monarchy—placed between elevated sentiments, generous sympathies, noble aspirations, and the necessity of pandering to the foulest humours of a barbarian populace—reacted now with terrible force, and betrayed them into conduct at once irrational and dastardly. They could conceive no better expedient to effectuate their double purpose, than the proposition to find Louis guilty upon his indictment, and to refer the sentence to the primary electoral assemblies. This was in some sort a practical appeal to the sovereignty of the people, which was the paramount dogma of all parties, and derived a degree of plausibility from the intention of submitting the embryo constitution to the ratification of the same assemblies. But it was a direct abnegation of their most cherished principles to invoke the interference of the masses on an affair of policy or government; and their main allegation, that the absolution and punishment of Louis being equally fraught with dangers, the nation ought to decide for itself which class of hazards it preferred to provoke, was simply puerile, as the same might be predicated of every question arising out of the establishment of a republic. Moreover, the project was liable to cogent objections of a different kind. The primary assemblies were 44,000 in number, comprising the whole male adult population; and to collect the suffrages of such heterogeneous bodies upon a subject of so exciting a nature, must necessarily be a work of time, and almost certainly be attended by fierce controversies, possibly convulsions, possibly civil war itself. The country would be agitated more than it had ever been since the first outbreak of the Revolution, inasmuch as the interest felt in the fate of Louis was universal and intense; and men who had hitherto kept aloof through indifference or timidity, would buckle on the armour of resolution, and emerge to take part in the affray: and France would be thus torn by internal dissensions in every subdivision of her surface, at a moment when she was threatened by aggressive musters on all her frontiers, and required her undivided energies to uphold her national existence. These topics Robespierre and his associates of the Mountain failed not to seize with avidity; and they added to the venom of their declamations by personal denunciations, which were not devoid of some semblance of truth. Vergniaud, the chief orator among the Girondins, essayed to defend them, and delivered a magnificent harangue, which, as a mere piece of eloquence, may rank with the finest efforts of any age; but if he successfully vindicated his friends from unjust aspersions, showed them to be ever the opponents of tyranny, whether exercised by

kings or by assassins, retorted upon his adversaries their anarchical designs, depicted in appalling colours the horrors of that system of blood which the execution of Louis was to seal and perpetuate, his reasoning was evasive and inconclusive upon the wisdom or propriety of shifting to popular adjudication the settlement of a question which had been at least argued before an Assembly claiming to be specially delegated to determine it, and which, even in that confined sphere, had engendered irrepressible rancour. He concluded with a terrific prophecy of the desolation and wo impending over France: he foreshadowed a tyranny the offspring of famine, turbulence, and bloodshed. Apostrophising the citizens of Paris, he exclaimed, 'Would you, in your hour of need, apply to those false friends, those perfidious flatterers, who had plunged you in the abyss? Ah, shun them rather! Dread their answer! I will tell you what it would be. You ask of them bread, and they will say to you, "*Go to the quarries, and dispute with the earth the bleeding fragments of the victims you have immolated!*" Or, "*Will you have blood? Take of it; here is blood and carrion, we have no other food to offer you!*" Citizens, you shudder! Oh, my country, I attest thee, bear witness to the efforts I make to save thee from this lamentable catastrophe!' The impression he produced was great, but it passed away; other speakers succeeded him, and still the question hung in the balance.

But the Jacobins brought more effectual influences to bear than argument or oratory. Deputations from the sections of Paris appeared at the bar of the Convention, and demanded the death of Louis in imperious terms. He should not escape, even were it base enough to absolve him, it was plainly advised, for bands of patriots had bound themselves by oath to kill him if he were not condemned. One of these deputations was accompanied by a long string of maimed and wounded men borne on frames, who were announced as the victims of the 10th of August; and by women and children, described as the widows and orphans of those who had fallen on that day. 'Behold,' said one of the speakers, 'widows, orphans, and mutilated patriots still bleeding from their wounds, who are come to plead for vengeance against the tyrant who had devoted them to death! Have you not heard that voice from Heaven, which cries unto you, *Whoso sheddeth the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed?* Louis murdered those citizens whom it was his duty to defend, for which he must die. Such, legislators, is the sentence which public morality and the people in their justice have pronounced, and which the empty subtleties of his friends and advocates shall not overturn.' Another spoke in the name of humanity at large, and claimed the death of Louis as one of a race justly branded 'the man destroying.' He included priests also in his anathema. 'Kings and

priests are alike,' he said; 'they are confederates; nor will peace reign on earth, nor virtue bear sway, until both are extirpated.' The president meekly replied to these audacious lecturers, and the whole procession defiled through the hall amid the boisterous applauses of the galleries. Besides these attempts to intimidate the Convention as a body, the members were assailed by riotous crowds outside, who violently abused and threatened such as had declared against the immediate execution of the king. The populace was the more readily infuriated on this subject, as a fearful dearth of provisions began to be felt; military reverses had occurred; the generals accused the ministers of withholding supplies from the armies, the ministers the generals of being the accomplices of knavish contractors; and all calamities were charged upon the unconscious prisoner of the Temple, who was the mysterious cause of famines, defeats, delinquencies, and treacheries of every kind. Whilst the freedom of the Convention was thus flagrantly overborne, an impressive appeal was made to it by the king of Spain on behalf of the head of the House of Bourbon. That monarch offered, if Louis's life were spared, and he with his family suffered to leave France, to form a treaty of neutrality with the republic, and to promote the restoration of peace generally in Europe. This was a most advantageous proposition for France, since, if realised, it would render disposable an army of 40,000 men, which was to be collected on the Pyrenean frontier to oppose a Spanish invasion. But no reasons of policy weighed with the Jacobins: they treated the king of Spain's communication with derision; and by the aid of the galleries, compelled the Convention to pass to the order of the day upon it. If they were insensible to a palpable benefit accruing from moderation, it was not likely they would heed reproaches addressed from a neighbouring and yet friendly country, although emanating from men who had incurred odium by upholding the cause of the French Revolution in its earlier and purer stages. The British House of Commons, upon a motion submitted by Fox and Sheridan, manifested its abhorrence of the cruelties to which Louis XVI. had been subjected, and of the doom which lowered over him. With the blind rage of madmen, the Jacobins were eager for war against all the nations of the earth that possessed regular governments; and these interventions in favour of Louis only tended, like all the efforts of his friends throughout his sad career, to insure and expedite the catastrophe sought to be averted.

The debate continued from day to day until the 7th of January. One of the last speakers was Barrère. With considerable oratorical powers, this personage united a suppleness of character, a shrewdness and astuteness of mind, which gave him vast influence over an assembly composed so largely as was the Convention of timid waverers, whose first object was to assure their personal

safety, but who often needed pretexts for consulting it rather than their consciences. Robespierre had perceived his value as an auxiliary; and despite the envious jealousy with which he habitually regarded men of real talent, had condescended to court him. Barrère canvassed all the positions assumed by the defenders of Louis, and exposed their invalidity. He reviewed the conduct of the king, and found it a long tissue of crimes against the national sovereignty. He handled the subject of forms, and showed that in the case of so extraordinary a culprit, they were properly dispensed with. He analysed the functions and powers of the Convention, and established them to be unlimited. Therefore he opposed the appeal to the people, and gave his voice for a definitive judgment. This speech was so excellently suited to decide the undetermined, and supply the flock of cowards with plausible grounds for yielding to a pressure they had no heart to withstand, that the Mountain was in ecstasies, and insisted that the discussion, having now exceeded all reasonable length, should be forthwith closed. After the accustomed amount of wrangling and vociferation, it carried the point; and a decree was passed declaring the debate terminated, and appointing the 14th January for a final decision upon the various questions that had arisen during its progress. To that day, accordingly, the further proceedings were adjourned. In the interim, the Jacobins omitted no artifice to inflame popular delusions, and to disseminate that *terror* which was to them an unfailing resource. The Girondins were inert and dispirited, as men who feel themselves in an equivocal situation, and they hung but loosely together. If they remained united, they could command a majority in the Assembly, and avail to enforce a reference to the primary assemblies. On the morning of the 14th, the Convention was early crowded with members, whilst a prodigious concourse of people filled the galleries, and blocked the avenues of the palace. But the whole day was consumed in adjusting the questions to be propounded, and they were eventually reduced to three.

1st, Is Louis Capet guilty of conspiracy against liberty, and of attempts against the general safety of the State?

2d, Shall the definitive judgment on Louis be referred to the primary assemblies?

3d, What punishment shall be inflicted on Louis?

On the 15th the voting commenced. The usual mode of voting by ballot was departed from, as secrecy would have been fatal to the projects and machinations of the regicide faction. Each member was required to mount the tribune and deliver his vote, with liberty to add his reasons if he pleased. Seven hundred and seventeen members answered to their names, and of these 683 pronounced a verdict of guilty unreservedly; 34

the same, with certain restrictions. So, upon the first question, the decision of the Convention was unanimous. The second was the touchstone of the whole inquest, and upon it the suffrages were naturally divided. Several members evaded the ordeal, and refused to pronounce an opinion: of the remainder, 281 declared for the reference to the primary assemblies; 423 against it. Accordingly, the device of the Girondins failed, and the judgment of the Convention was to be definitive. The third question thus became the most momentous, and by consent it was postponed till the following day. Before it was put, a long and acrimonious debate occurred touching the majority required to condemn. By the penal code, two-thirds of the judges must concur to render a finding valid; and it was contended that the Convention, sitting as a court of criminal justice, was bound by that canon. The Mountain repudiated such a notion with great asperity; and Danton, who had just returned from a mission in Belgium, denounced it in the energetic language peculiar to him, and with the boisterous tones which so overawed his hearers. The Assembly adopted his doctrine, and resolved that, as all its decrees were passed by a simple majority, there could be no deviation from the uniform precedent. This preliminary point, nevertheless, occupied it until eight in the evening, and it then determined that the sitting should be permanent until the voting was concluded. An extraordinary agitation prevailed as preparations were made for commencing that process. The galleries were exclusively filled with Jacobin partisans, who manifested their impatience and their sentiments by loud outcries. As the members appeared in the tribune, they saluted them with groans and howls, or with acclamations, according to the tenor of their votes. The sitting continued the whole night and far into the next day, as nearly all the members assigned the reasons of their conclusions. Uninterrupted tumult prevailed during the whole period. The populace in the galleries indulged in every species of clamour and insult, whilst many of the deputies lost their temper, and retorted in like strains. Such was the dreadful confusion at times, so fierce the excitement, and virulent the exhibition of passions, that a general conflict seemed impending, and many a stout heart gave way before the storm. It appeared as if a civil war already raged; and if the death of a single man, albeit unjustly inflicted, could avert the calamity, it were best to succumb, and accord the sacrifice. Thus several members pronounced for death, to the astonishment of both friends and enemies. Vergniaud himself was of the number, and the Girondins generally proved the little reliance that could be placed on their stability and firmness of purpose. One member drew upon himself the execration of the whole Assembly, and even the murmurs of the galleries. This was Egalité, the infamous Orlean, who

licked the dust before the Jacobins, and adjudged his kinsman to death. His abject turpitude availed him little, for it overwhelmed him with ignominy and contempt. At length the votes were given, and the secretaries proceeded to count them. The utmost uncertainty existed as to the result, for so many different deliverances had been enunciated, that it was doubtful whether a majority would be found to sustain any one in particular. Curiosity was therefore at its height, when the president announced he was about to declare the state of the vote. 'Citizens,' he premised, 'as you are now about to perform a great act of justice, I hope that your humanity will induce you to be profoundly silent. When justice has spoken, humanity has a claim to be attended to.' After this singular exordium, he recapitulated the various suffrages. Seven hundred and twenty-one members had voted, making the absolute majority 361. Two had voted for perpetual imprisonment; 286 for imprisonment and banishment upon the conclusion of peace, for immediate exile or confinement, and for death conditionally if an invasion occurred; 46 for death, with a reprieve until the conclusion of peace or the ratification of the constitution; 361 for death simply; 20 also for death, but with a proviso that it might be expedient to delay it, nevertheless independently of that proviso for death. This was another miserable artifice of the Girondins to disguise their pusillanimous infirmity. In all, therefore, 387 had voted for death. 'Consequently, I declare,' said the president, 'in the name of the National Convention, that the punishment decreed against Louis Capet is DEATH.' This president, incredible to be related, was no other than Vergniaud!

Immediately after this judgment was pronounced, the three advocates of Louis XVI. were admitted to the bar. They came to tender an appeal to the people. They were suffered to plead in its support, and the aged Malesherbes, breaking down in his speech, craved an adjournment to prepare himself; but the Assembly summarily rejected both his application and the king's appeal. The next day, the 18th, was taken up in verifying the calculation of the votes, and in debate upon the final question, whether or not the execution of the sentence should be respited. If any considerable delay were interposed—such as until the conclusion of peace, the ratification of the constitution, or the occurrence of an invasion—the life of Louis might be saved; hence the entire process was again at issue. The discussion extended to the 19th, and it was not until three in the morning of Sunday the 20th that the result of this last contest was proclaimed. Three hundred and ten voices had been given for delay, three hundred and eighty against it; consequently the execution was to be immediate. On the motion of Cambaceres, it was ordered that the Executive Council should notify the sentence to Louis, and

take measures for putting it in force within twenty-four hours after such notification. This sitting, which terminated the trial, was characterised by less turbulence and uproar than the preceding, and was chiefly remarkable as a scene of levity and exhilaration. The Jacobins, being sure of their aim, could dispense with further violence. Numerous females were present, who sat in boxes and conversed among themselves, chatted with the deputies, and partook of ices and refreshments with all the gaiety and animation of an opera saloon. Parties of bacchanals mustered in the galleries, drank healths, betted odds on the votes, and occasionally sang the refrain of some favourite catch. The members moved continually to and fro; and such was the bustle, the clatter of tongues, the noise of mirth and revelry, that the secretaries could with difficulty record the *ayes* and *noes* of the voters, as they stood up in the pale candlelight, and in hollow accents ejaculated the pregnant monosyllables.

Malesherbes undertook the mournful task of communicating to Louis XVI. the sentence of the Convention. He was so overcome by his feelings, that he could not articulate; his voice was stifled with sobs, and he sank on his knees. The king raised him up, pressed him warmly to his bosom, and led him to the closet in which they were permitted to hold private consultations. The Commune, however, interdicted him from further intercourse with his counsel, appointed four municipal officers to keep him constantly in sight, two to sit by his bedside during the night, and ordered a rigorous search of his rooms and person, in quest of weapons or offensive instruments. He made no complaint except of the exclusion of his counsel, against which he vainly remonstrated. On the afternoon of the 20th, the arrival of the Executive Council was announced to him. He arose, advanced to the middle of the antechamber, and stood in an attitude of great firmness and dignity. Garat, minister of justice, was at the head of the deputation, which included Lebrun, minister for foreign affairs; Grouvelle, secretary of the Council; the mayor, Santerre; and several other officials. Keeping on his hat, Garat thus addressed him: 'Louis, the National Convention has charged the Executive Council to make known to you its decrees of the 15th, 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th, and 20th of January. The secretary of the Council will read them to you.' Grouvelle unfolded a roll of paper, and with a tremulous voice read the several decisions to which the Convention had arrived. Louis heard him perfectly unmoved, and when he had finished, stepped forward and took the paper from him, folding it up and putting it in his pocket. He then presented to Garat a letter, which he requested him to deliver immediately to the Convention. As the minister appeared to hesitate, he added, 'I will read it to you.' Without the least faltering or change of countenance, he read aloud the letter,

which contained demands for a delay of three days, to prepare himself for death, and to be allowed the attendance of the spiritual person he should nominate; to be freed from the incessant supervision established over him by the Commune; to be permitted to see his family without witnesses; that after his death they might be set at liberty; and that the nation would remunerate those who had suffered losses in his service or been dependent upon him. Garat received the letter, and promised to lay it forthwith before the Convention. Louis also gave him the address of the priest he wished to attend him, in case his request was complied with. He then returned to his own room, walked up and down for a few minutes, and directed Cléry in his usual tone to bring in the dinner. He sat down to table, and observed there was no knife. A municipal officer informed him that the Commune had prohibited him the use of either a knife or a fork. 'What!' he exclaimed, 'do they think me such a coward as to make an attempt on my own life? Crimes have been imputed to me, but I am innocent of them, and I am not afraid to die.' He ate a little stewed meat with a spoon, and rose hastily from the table.

The Convention granted the demands of the king to see his family alone, and to have the aid of any priest he thought proper, but passed to the order of the day on his other applications. Garat returned to the Temple at six in the evening, accompanied by the clergyman he had indicated, who was the Abbé Edgeworth de Firmont, a native of Ireland, and formerly confessor to the Princess Elizabeth. Notwithstanding the safeguard of the minister, the abbé was detained, and searched with the minutest particularity before he was permitted to ascend to the king; and as he passed the sentinels on the narrow staircase, they assailed him with imprecations, 'making the vaults of the Temple,' as he himself says, 're-echo with their horrible shouts.' When ushered into the presence of Louis, he found him surrounded by Garat, Santerre, and a number of municipal officers, who, on a motion from him, withdrew. When left alone, both were deeply affected; the abbé fell on his knees, unable to speak; the king raising him, said, 'Forgive me a moment's weakness, if such it can be called; for a long time I have lived among unrelenting enemies, and habit has in some degree familiarised me with them; but the sight of a man of humanity, a faithful subject, touches my heart and melts me as you see.' Their conference was not of long duration, a municipal officer interrupting it by the announcement that the royal family were coming down stairs. The king trembled with agitation, but he desired M. Edgeworth to remain in the closet, and went out to meet the beings so dear to him. An agonising interview ensued. Tears, sobs, lamentations, burst from the desolate princesses. They

embraced the king, and hung about his neck with passionate exclamations. Growing more composed, they engaged in earnest conversation. They were alone, but the jealous officers kept them in sight through the glass-door of the room. They continued together nearly two hours. At the end of that time Louis opened the door. 'I assure you,' he was heard to repeat, 'I will see you again to-morrow morning at eight o'clock.' 'You promise?' cried the princesses in one voice. 'Yes, I promise.' 'Why not at seven?' urged the queen. 'Very well, at seven,' the king replied; 'farewell!' This terrible word he uttered in so plaintive an accent, that the young princess-royal fell at his feet in a swoon. Cléry raised her, and assisted Madame Elizabeth to support her. The king gave them all one more embrace, and tore himself from them. 'Farewell!—farewell!' he cried, and retreated into the chamber in which he had left M. Edgeworth. 'What an interview I have gone through!' he exclaimed to the abbé. 'Ah! why should I love with so much tenderness, and why am I so tenderly beloved? But it is past; let us now turn our thoughts to that which is alone of importance—the salvation of my soul.' They resumed their religious exercises. Louis was extremely desirous of having the sacrament administered to him; but to celebrate mass, would have dangerously compromised M. Edgeworth, as he was a nonjuring priest. Nothing remained but to crave permission to perform the rite from the Commune. M. Edgeworth descended to the commissioners who sat in council below, and making known his request to them, was at first answered with evasion and studied objections; but after much contention* and delay, he succeeded in obtaining their sanction; on the condition, nevertheless, that every religious ceremony should be concluded by seven in the morning; 'for,' as the chairman of the commissioners observed with cold-blooded flippancy, 'at eight precisely Louis Capet must set out for the place of execution.' M. Edgeworth returned to the king, and remained with him until past midnight. At half-past twelve they issued from the oratory, and Louis gave himself into the hands of Cléry to be undressed. As he lay down in bed, he observed with undeviating calmness to that faithful and afflicted servant, 'Cléry, you will call me in the morning at five o'clock.' A moment afterwards, he was in profound sleep.

At five he arose and dressed. 'I have slept soundly,' he remarked to Cléry; 'I stood in need of rest; yesterday was a fatiguing day.' He passed an hour with the confessor, and in

* One of the commissioners warned his colleagues to be on their guard, as the application was probably a snare. 'There are examples in history,' he urged, 'of priests who have mixed poison with the host.' The abbé indignantly repelled the insinuation, saying that he had not brought the sacred elements with him, and must procure them through their means. The rest of the commissioners, though morose and cynical, behaved with comparative civility.

the interim Cléry arranged an altar in the large chamber, using for the purpose a chest of drawers. All the articles for the celebration of mass had been furnished by the commissioners according to their promise, even to the surplice and sacerdotal raiment. The ceremony was duly solemnised, Cléry delivering the responses, and then the king received the communion. He continued afterwards in silent prayer for several minutes, and arose seemingly much refreshed. 'How happy am I,' he said to M. Edgeworth, 'to have preserved my religious principles! Without them, what should I now be? But with them, death has no bitterness or terrors.' He bethought him of his promise to see his family again, but the abbé dissuaded him from putting the princesses and himself to so dreadful a trial. He yielded, and charged Cléry to bear them his last farewell. Shortly after seven, the din of preparation commenced. Detachments of cavalry entered the courts of the Temple; drums beat to arms in all the quarters of Paris; and the movements of troops and the rattling of cannon were distinctly audible in the tower. The Abbé Edgeworth shook with emotion, for he felt the fatal moment was drawing nigh. Louis looked at him tranquilly, and said, 'I believe they are getting ready.' He called Cléry, and desired him to procure a pair of scissors, in order that he might cut off his hair. The commissioners of the Commune were, however, obdurate in refusing to intrust him with such an instrument. At half-past eight Santerre burst into the antechamber with noise and fury. He was accompanied by several municipal officers, and attended by a dozen soldiers, whom he drew up in two lines. The king opened the door of his closet, in answer to loud knocks upon it, and exclaimed with an air of authority, 'I am occupied; I will come to you in a few moments!' He closed the door, and kneeling, solicited the abbé's last benediction. This given, he emerged with a serene countenance. Advancing to Santerre, he said to him, 'You are come for me?' 'Yes,' replied the uncouth brewer, keeping on his hat, and shrinking, with all his assurance, before the unruffled dignity of the king's demeanour.* Drawing from his pocket a paper, Louis presented it to a member of the Commune who stood foremost, saying, 'I beg you to give this paper to the queen—to my wife.' 'It is no business of mine,' replied the varlet, who was a constitutional priest named Jaques Roux; 'I am come here to conduct you to the scaffold.'

* Nothing struck these base-hearted men so much as the king's fortitude and equanimity. They regarded it as something supernatural. One of the most villanous of them, Hebert, the editor of a paper called the *Père Duchesne*, which rivalled Marat's in atrocity, himself records that he went purposely to enjoy the scene of the sentence of death being read to Louis, but 'he exhibited such dignity, nobleness, grandeur, and suavity combined, in his demeanour and words, that I could not stand it,' as he says; 'tears of rage moistened my eyelids. He had in his looks and manner something evidently more than human. I withdrew, attempting to restrain the tears which flowed in spite of me.'

Another municipal officer took the paper, and Louis said to him, 'You may read it; there are some particulars in it which I would wish made known to the Commune.' It was the will he had composed on Christmas day. Then turning to Santerre, 'Lead on!' he cried. At the gate of the outer court a carriage waited for him, guarded by two gendarmes, who entered it with him and M. Edgeworth. The streets were lined with National Guards, and a strong escort surrounded the carriage. The Jacobins affected to fear a rescue: they had kept their club permanent throughout the night, and sent out continual deputations to the sections, stimulating them to get their battalions under arms. A deplorable occurrence had tended to redouble their vigilance. On the evening of the 20th, a deputy who had voted for the king's death, Lepelletier de St Fargeau, was assassinated in a coffee-room by an old Life-Guardsman called Paris. Lepelletier was a noble of ancient lineage and large possessions, on which account his alliance with the Jacobins rendered him particularly obnoxious to the royalists. His murder served the Jacobins with many a useful and specious imputation both present and future. Their apprehensions were not, however, altogether groundless touching an attempt to deliver Louis XVI.; as royalist writers are agreed that one was to be made, if it had been practicable, and which the precautions taken frustrated.*

The procession moved slowly through the streets, and occupied two hours in reaching the place of execution. The houses were generally closed, and save the armed troops, there were but few spectators. M. Edgeworth put into the hands of the king a breviary, from which he recited psalms and prayers appropriate to his situation the whole way. When the carriage stopped, he paused and whispered to the abbé, 'We are arrived, if I mistake not.' It was so. The scaffold was erected on the vast area of the Place de la Revolution, and around it a large space was kept free, planted with cannon. Encircling the range of guns stood files of pikemen, federalists of approved hardihood in deeds of blood, and behind them the savage rabble clustered. Shouts of exultation greeted the arrival of the doomed monarch, who, the moment he alighted from the carriage, was seized by three executioners, with the intention of stripping him. He repulsed them haughtily, took off his coat and waistcoat himself, untied his neck-cloth, and opened his shirt. The executioners again advanced,

* 'On the morning of that terrible day (the 21st of January 1793) the princesses rose at six. The evening before, the queen had, by a great effort, undressed and put her son to bed. She afterwards threw herself, dressed as she was, on her own bed, and lay all night trembling with cold and misery. At a quarter past six the door opened, and an officer entered in search of a prayer-book for the use of the king. The princesses expected it to be a summons to descend, and they continued in the hope of again seeing the king, until the shouts of the populace told them the crime was consummated.'—*Sufferings of the Royal Family*, p. 296.

and grasped him by the arms. 'What are you attempting?' he asked, drawing back from them. 'To bind you,' one of them answered. 'To bind me!' he exclaimed: 'no, I will not consent to that. Perform what you have been ordered; but you shall never bind me.' They were preparing to use violence, when Louis turned his eyes to the abbé, and silently besought his counsel. 'Sire, in this new outrage,' said the ecclesiastic, 'I perceive only another trait of resemblance to the Saviour, who is about to be your reward.' 'You are right,' returned the king; 'I will drink of the cup to the dregs.' He suffered himself to be bound, and leaning on the abbé, walked to the scaffold. Ascending the steps, he advanced to the edge of the platform, and pronounced in a loud voice these dying words:—'Frenchmen, I die innocent of the crimes laid to my charge; I pardon those who have occasioned my death; and I pray to God that the blood you are now going to shed may never be visited on France!' Santerre ordered the drums to beat and drown his voice. The executioners dragged him with violence under the guillotine, and in an instant his head was severed from his body. As the fatal axe fell, the Abbé Edgeworth articulated, 'Son of St Louis, ascend to Heaven!'

One of the executioners held up the decapitated head, and exhibited it to the multitude. The sight was responded to by furious shouts of *Vive la nation! Vive la republique!* The crowd pressed round the scaffold, and dipped pikes, handkerchiefs, and rags in the blood. The executioners distributed pieces of the clothes and hair in exchange for money. All these were afterwards paraded through the streets, and particularly around the walls of the Temple, by hordes of the populace, filling the air with demoniac yells.

Thus perished Louis XVI. on a public scaffold, in the thirty-ninth year of his age, the victim of a Revolution which his very virtues unfitted him to control, and which he had been basely left to struggle against almost unaided. His fate was strange and calamitous. When he escaped to Varennes, every political party hoped he might reach the frontier, for he was already an incumbrance in the new state of things, difficult to be treated. Even after his deposition, a large majority of those who ultimately condemned him to death, desired to spare his life through motives both of generosity and of policy. But the Jacobins had willed that he should die; and although a small minority in the nation at large, they ruled in Paris, and held the Convention itself in subjection. The aim of their leaders was to destroy all adversaries who stood in the way of their ambition; and Louis presented himself as a fitting object to make a first example of. Their creed was, that they must strike *terror*, and that the Revolution was to be saved only by that engine. Yet at the moment,

the death of Louis seemed fraught with ruin to the Revolution. Spain and England awaited only this signal to join the coalition against France, who would then have the whole of Europe on her hands; and, disorganised and distracted as she was, the chances of her successful resistance appeared hopeless. In the calculations of reason, therefore, it was to be assumed as a thing impossible from the direful contingencies it must engender. But no considerations could daunt or arrest the Jacobins in their frenzy; and they were content to beard the world with a system of ferocity that isolated them from the human species. Unchecked by conscience or remorse, they hesitated at no sacrifice; and the interest expressed in behalf of Louis, only incited them the more to fling his head at the congress of associated monarchs.

CHAPTER VII.

INVASION OF BELGIUM BY THE FRENCH, AND ITS SUBSEQUENT RE-
CONQUEST--DOWNFALL OF THE GIRONDINS--OCTOBER 1792 TO 2D
JUNE 1793.

Military successes, through a singular perversion but universal interpretation of the oracles of wisdom, are considered immediate manifestations of Divine favour. Among all Christian nations they are followed by thanksgivings and pompous religious ceremonies; even by the heathen they are celebrated with games and rites of a solemn, if not sacred character; so natural is it to man to cloak his passions and iniquities with the assumption of a supernatural participation. The French republic, founded, reared, and cemented in blood, was illustrated by a profuse allotment of these triumphs. The very day of its creation had been signalled by the victory of Valmy, the first of a resplendent series; and it had continued to gather fresh trophies up to the hour in which it threw off allegiance to the normal laws of humanity, and declared itself in rebellion to earth and Heaven.

Three powers only had as yet engaged in actual hostilities against France--Austria, Prussia, and Piedmont. The two first had invaded her territory, and been ignominiously expelled from it. The latter had collected an army in Savoy, with the intention of overrunning her southern provinces. Montesquiou, who commanded the forces levied to oppose this army, which was composed of Piedmontese and Austrians, had, after narrowly escaping impeachment for inertness, which was construed to be treachery, assumed the offensive; and without his enemy making

any serious effort to stop him, conquered the whole of Savoy, together with the county of Nice. In reporting his achievement, he mentioned that the people of those countries were animated with the spirit of liberty, and ripe for enfranchisement, whereupon the Convention determined, in conformity with a design first propounded by the daring genius of Dumouriez, to extend the confines of France to what were denominated her natural limits on that frontier—namely, the chain of the Alps—and to incorporate Savoy under the title of the department of Mont Blanc. According to the same inspiration, the natural boundary on the east was to be the Rhine, from the sea to Switzerland; and this great idea, conceived when France was threatened with annihilation, became the fixed and irrevocable dogma of the Revolution. Dumouriez had himself foregone the opportunity of realising it by an active pursuit of the retreating Prussians, and by a junction with Custine, who, after seizing the important stronghold of Mayence, had imprudently ventured across the Rhine to levy contributions on the city of Frankfort; an act in itself most censurable, and as an aggression on the German empire, most heedless and impolitic. But Dumouriez left his army, and hastened to Paris, in order to make arrangements for his projected invasion of Belgium. He stayed four days only in the capital, and temporised, with his usual ability, between the contending factions; by both of whom he was treated with attention, but scarcely with cordiality. His great services could not be denied; his necessity, too, was manifest; but still he was an object of distrust to the Girondins, because they had not forgotten his defection in June 1792, on the dismissal of the three ministers; to the Jacobins, because they were habitually suspicious of all who, by talents or merit, attained a superiority independently of them. Marat openly assailed him with his accustomed virulence, and ascribed to him the design of rendering himself Duke of Brabant. Nevertheless, he settled with Servan and the Executive Council the general plan of a winter campaign, and obtained promises of all the needful supplies for his army, together with a remittance of 6,000,000 francs in specie towards its pay. He set out for Flanders on the 20th October, and on his arrival found that the siege of Lille had been raised by Duke Albert of Saxe-Teschen, who had retreated across the frontier, after uselessly bombarding the town, without an adequate force to reduce it. He also learnt that Servan, immediately after his departure, had resigned the ministry at war on the plea of ill health, and been succeeded by Pache, upon the recommendation of Roland. He was well pleased at the change, for he had reasons to be discontented with Servan; but both he and the Girondins had shortly cause to regret the fatal appointment. Pache possessed a plausible simplicity, which had completely deceived the blunt

and honest Roland, and even his more sharp-witted wife. No sooner was he installed in the ministry, than he threw himself wholly into the arms of the Jacobins, swept the offices of his department of their former experienced occupants, broke up the excellent commissariat which had survived from the old régime, and annulled all the contracts of his predecessor; abandoning to a swarm of ignorant and hungry Jacobins the entire war administration. Hence the most direful confusion ensued, and the armies were left in a state of destitution. The supplies promised to Dumouriez never arrived; his soldiers were without shoes, greatcoats, or money, about to enter a country professedly as its liberators, and therefore bound to exercise forbearance towards its inhabitants; yet the Jacobins chuckled over his embarrassments, for they almost wished he might be discomfited. The general, however, was impatient to begin his enterprise; and, half-ragged as it was, he put his army in motion on the 25th. He commanded in all nearly 90,000 men, distributed into four army-corps. He himself was in the centre with 40,000 men; Labourdonnaye on his left with 18,000 towards the coast; D'Harville and Valence on his right with about 15,000 each. The two latter were appointed to prevent the junction of Clairfayt, marching from the Argonne, with Duke Albert; but owing to unavoidable delays, they failed in that object. The united imperialists amounted only, in the whole, to 45,000 men. Dumouriez, therefore, had an overwhelming superiority of force. He could afford to detach Labourdonnaye to sweep the coast, and capture the maritime towns of Ostend and Antwerp. He advanced in person against the Austrians, who, notwithstanding they were threatened and might have been turned on both their flanks, determined to defend the high road to Brussels, and took up a position behind a formidable line of intrenchments before the city of Mons. They planted about 25,000 men to guard these intrenchments, the rest of their forces being dispersed as far as Tournay, to stop Labourdonnaye if possible. The centre of their position was the village of Jemappes; their right was in the village of Quaregnon; their left in the village of Cuesmes; their extreme left on the height of Berthaimont, covering Mons. If Dumouriez could dislodge them from this latter position, he would get behind their main army, and probably compel them to lay down their arms. D'Harville was instructed to execute this decisive operation, but fortunately for the Austrians he left it unattempted. On the morning of the 6th November, the French general arranged his troops for an assault upon the Austrian lines. His purpose was to carry the two positions of Quaregnon and Cuesmes, before making an attack upon Jemappes, in order that he might take it in front and flank at the same time. But these villages were defended by strong

redoubts, and the Austrians opposed an obstinate resistance. The French had planted heavy artillery to silence the fire of the redoubts, which continued, nevertheless, to vomit destruction amongst the attacking columns. The French soldiers stood their ground with admirable firmness, and at length succeeded in storming Quaregnon; but old General Ferrand, who commanded them on that point, hesitated to follow Dumouriez's positive injunctions, which were to wheel upon Jemappes, and assault its defences in flank. He must encounter a fearful cannonade, and preferred to remain under shelter of the houses of Quaregnon. Thouvenot, in whom Dumouriez justly trusted as a second self, was sent by him to hasten the movement. He effected it by about noon, and the moment he appeared on the angle of Jemappes, Dumouriez gave the word for the centre to advance with heads down and bayonets fixed. It was led by the eldest son of Egalité, who had enjoyed the title of Duke de Chartres, and was now a lieutenant-general in the service of the republic. After undergoing many strange vicissitudes and adventures, he has since been called to the throne of France, and occupies it in this year of grace 1847. He displayed the greatest intrepidity upon the present occasion, and to him was chiefly owing the success of the battle. His troops recoiled before the tremendous fire from the Austrian intrenchments, which were reared in three tiers; whilst a large body of cavalry prepared to charge them from a ravine between Jemappes and Cuesmes. Already a brigade had given way, and exposed the flank of the centre to this charge of cavalry; Dumouriez's valet, Renard, inspired by a fit of heroism, rushed up to its commander, reproached him with cowardice, rallied the brigade, and led it to the mouth of the ravine, where, being joined by several squadrons of horse, it prevented the irruption of the Austrian hussars. Chartres, or Egalité the younger, as he was designated in the Revolutionary nomenclature, meanwhile re-formed his broken columns under murderous showers of grape, put himself at their head, and after a desperate conflict, stormed the triple range of intrenchments. Dumouriez had flown to his right wing, where Beurnonville was in distress. He restored the combat in that direction, carried Cuesmes at the point of the bayonet, and thus completed the defeat of the imperialists; who, however, retreated leisurely, and in good order. The loss on both sides was heavy: the French took 1500 prisoners, but they had more killed and wounded than the Austrians. Yet they had gained a splendid victory, by dint of fortitude and prowess alone, against veteran troops, defended by almost impregnable batteries. It excited a delirium of joy throughout France, and struck Europe with mingled astonishment and alarm. If, however, Dumouriez knew how to repel enemies and gain

battles, he was sadly deficient in the art of improving victory. This he had shown on the retreat of Brunswick, and evinced it even more palpably after Jemappes. He loitered several days in Mons, detained certainly by the destitute state of his army, and by his attempts to procure supplies voluntarily from the Belgians on the faith of assignats, in which dubious shape his only funds consisted, and allowed Duke Albert and Clairfayt to execute their retreat perfectly unmolested. It was not until the 14th November that he pushed forward and entered Brussels. Subsequently he displayed more activity; and in the course of a month, after having repulsed them in sundry stiff encounters, he expelled the Austrians from the Low Countries, pursued them to the banks of the Meuse, overran the bishopric of Liege, and was in possession of all the Belgian fortresses. On the 12th December he put his army into winter quarters, posting General Dampierre at Aix-la-Chapelle, whence he had driven Clairfayt by a brisk and final attack.

Thus had Dumouriez accomplished the object he had so long fostered in his aspiring mind: he had conquered Belgium, exalted his fame as a successful warrior, and restored the ancient terror of the French arms. He was at the height of glory, and at the summit of his wishes; yet from this very moment did his decline and ruin date. To fight and vanquish were easy things in comparison with the task of governing and administering. Belgium was in a very peculiar situation; subjugated yet emancipated, she had hailed the soldiers of the republic as deliverers. The general had assured her inhabitants in a proclamation that he came only to free them from the hated yoke of Austria, which they themselves had vainly attempted to shake off; that their government or laws would not be interfered with; that no contributions would be levied on them; and that, in short, no act of sovereignty or conquest would be exercised. Dumouriez was himself disposed to carry out the pledges of this manifesto, but the National Convention had different views. On the 19th of November, it had passed a decree promising assistance and fraternity to all populations that might be desirous of recovering their liberty; and it now proceeded to exemplify its meaning upon the Belgians, who were the first to fall under the operation of the decree. An army passing over a country, however strictly kept in check, must always cause havoc and confusion; but when the bonds of discipline are loose, the soldiers in penury and starvation, the principles of order and the rights of property in no great repute, the devastation is necessarily magnified a hundred-fold. Still, in the presence of an enemy, plunder is not always feasible, and Dumouriez sought to feed the wants of his army by contracts with Belgian capitalists, which he entered into through the medium of his commissariat chiefs, Malus and D'Espagnac.

If purveyors could be found on the very spot content to furnish supplies, and take in exchange the depreciated paper currency of the Revolution, it is evident that such an arrangement must be singularly advantageous and favourable. On that very account the Convention annulled it. Anything that might tend to render Dumouriez independent was obnoxious to both the Girondins and the Jacobins; and they were especially fearful of his conciliating the Belgians, and becoming popular among them. They concurred, therefore, in adopting a course which appears positively insane, and which shortly turned the fair region of Belgium into a wilderness of anarchy and desolation, such as has rarely marked the track of the most merciless conquerors. Attila and his Huns, or Alaric and his Goths, scarcely left more dismal traces of their destroying presence than did the enfranchising republicans of France. None more deeply mourned the terrible misfortunes he had brought upon the country than Dumouriez himself; and, immured in the episcopal palace of Liege, he communed with himself thus pathetically, 'Would to God that this last campaign had never been undertaken, and, above all, that I had not been charged with it! Its success has filled me with chagrin and regret, since it has given scope to the wickedness, cupidity, and barbarity of the monsters who have perverted and disgraced a nation hitherto estimable. It may return from its errors; but how will it obliterate the memory of its crimes?'

In modern times Belgium had always been subject to a foreign master, though it had made many heroic efforts to relieve itself from thralldom. The Catholic religion had been re-established in it through the persecutions of Alva and of the moody tyrant Philip II., since which period it had continued the faith of its inhabitants, who had relapsed into a strong attachment to it and its ministers. The church, consequently, was hierarchical, and possessed great wealth. Its dignitaries were, with the nobles, generally inclined to the House of Austria; but the great body of the clergy partook the sentiments of the industrious and intelligent classes, who longed for a domestic government founded on moderate and liberal bases. There were Revolutionists, too, of the order of Jacobins, who contemplated a total overthrow of society, after the example of their prototypes in France. These, however, were few in number, and confined to desperadoes in the towns; for the bulk of the Flemish community was distinguished by a sober and orderly temperament. Nevertheless, it was this demoralising minority that found favour with the French Convention; and instead of allowing the Belgians to give themselves a government, as had been promised, it set up the rule of clubs, and deputed emissaries to fashion them after the approved model. It instituted a committee of contracts, through whom alone the armies were to be supplied; nominated a new

commissary-general in the person of Ronsin, a playwright at minor theatres; and launched decrees of impeachment against Malus and D'Espagnac, in reward for the beneficial bargains they had made at the instance of Dumouriez. It then sent Danton, Lacroix, and two other deputies to exercise the functions of proconsuls. Spoliation was thenceforth practised openly, and without a blush.* Upon the report and motion of Cambon, who was chairman of the finance committee, it was decreed that public property of every description, lay and ecclesiastical, should be seized as security for the expenses of the war; and that the French assignats, which in Paris itself had already sunk two-thirds in value, should be forced upon the Belgians at par. This was considered just, on the principle that, as the French carried with them the inestimable boon of liberty, enfranchised communities should share all the fortunes of their Revolution. This boon of liberty was interpreted in the same decree passed on the 15th December, whereby it was ordered that in all countries then or thereafter occupied by French armies, the existing authorities should be suppressed, and all taxes and imposts, tithes, and feudal rights of every kind, abolished; that no noble, or priest, or person employed in the subverted administration should be eligible to hold any office, or exercise any franchise; and that the entire population should be convoked in primary assemblies, to determine upon a form of government; in other words, that perfect anarchy should be introduced, under cover of which the French might appropriate the whole resources of the country. Cambon expounded the design to his applauding colleagues. 'Upon entering a country,' he said in his report, 'what should be our first care? To take the property of our enemies as a pledge for the expenses of the war. We must, therefore, put under the safeguard of the nation the estates, both real and personal, belonging to the government and the princes, as well as to their abettors, adherents, associates, minions, and satellites, to lay and ecclesiastical corporations and bodies; in short, to all the adherents of tyranny.' This sweeping confiscation involved all classes in one indiscriminate ruin; for it was provided in the decree, that if a people should *refuse or renounce* the liberty propagated by France—that is, if it should exhibit a reluctance to forego its institutions, religion, and property, or regret their loss, or decline to take fictitious money as sterling gold—it was to be treated as an enemy, and subjected to all the rigours of war. Under such a process, the Belgians were speedily converted into implacable enemies, and they turned their eyes to their old master the emperor, beseeching him to come to their rescue

* Madame Roland accuses Danton of having amassed great plunder in Belgium, and of having, after his return, confessed to a fortune of 1,400,000 livres (£56,000).—*Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 17.

from the scourge of republican domination. It was not long before they had an opportunity of wreaking revenge, and they eagerly embraced it; but in the interim, such was the horrible state to which the country was reduced, that the French soldiers themselves fled from it as from a land of pestilence. Upwards of 10,000 men deserted from Dumouriez's army-corps alone. That general was in a distress of mind difficult to describe. Finding all his efforts and remonstrances useless with the commissioners of the Convention, he repaired to Paris, in the hope of obtaining a repeal or modification of the decree of the 15th December: but he had the mortification to discover that his influence was null; that the traditionary maxim of the ingratitude of republics was already exemplified; and that his name was a theme of reproach at the club of Jacobins, who reviled him incessantly under the various appellations of Cæsar, Cromwell, Monk, and Lafayette. It was in vain, therefore, that he had sought to disarm suspicion and hostility, by assuming the title of 'General of the *Sans-culottes*;' he merely degraded himself, without gaining any credit with the rabble he stooped to propitiate. He returned to his army in dudgeon and disgust; but so buoyant was his spirit, so unquenchable his ardour, that, with his attenuated and squalid forces, he planned an act of farther aggression, and prepared to break across the iron-bound frontier of Holland.*

France, as a republic, refused to be bound by treaties to which her late monarchs had been parties, or given their adherence. In fact she held herself released from all obligations imposed upon States by the law of nations; and therefore not only against her unjust invaders, Austria and Prussia, did she assume the offensive, but also against countries hitherto neutral. The annexation of Savoy was a disturbance of the European balance, and hence a *casus belli*; but the opening of the Scheldt was in direct violation of the treaty of Munster. It was unnatural, doubtless, to interdict the navigation of that splendid river to the commerce of Belgium; nothing more monstrous was perhaps ever imagined in the crooked politics of cabinets; but still it was the condition on which Austria held the Low Countries. The French could only succeed to the Austrian rights; yet no sooner was the city of Antwerp in their possession, than they disregarded the terms of the tenure, and opened the Scheldt to be freely navigated. Holland scarcely uttered a complaint, for the vicinity of the conquering army kept her in awe; but England expressed a determination not to tolerate the infraction. It was nevertheless but a sorry plea for war—the restoration of the privilege of using their

* He frankly confesses the immediate motive. 'Arms, clothes, horses, provisions, money,' he says, 'all were in Holland, and there they were to be sought.'—*Memoirs*, vol. iv. p. 8.

own waters to the once celebrated but then deserted emporiums of Antwerp and Ghent; and fortunately for the British ministry, it was relieved from a difficult dilemma by the precipitancy of the French themselves. Then, as at all times, up to the current hour, the condition of England was totally misunderstood by them. From the violent language of certain societies, they never doubted she was ripe for a universal revolt against her aristocratic institutions; whereas the excesses of their Revolution had produced so strong a reaction in the public mind, that the tendency, unhappily, was in favour of an arbitrary rather than a more popular government. It has required a whole generation to pass away before the impression of those excesses has been obliterated; their adducement or reminiscence was always sufficient to stifle the most reasonable demands for amelioration; and if the French Revolution shed enlightenment over the continent, and lifted a load of prejudice and bigotry from both its rulers and its communities, it long retarded the progress of wholesome reform in Great Britain, and fastened upon her people for many years a dreary reign of practical tyranny, corruption, and intolerance, such as no nation claiming to have a constitution can be said to have ever submitted to.

Pitt, the British prime minister, who was a man undoubtedly of enlarged views, sound notions, and high personal integrity, animated with a strong desire to render his country great and paramount, had hitherto resisted the array of powerful influences combined to provoke a war against France, or rather against her Revolution. The personal character and predilections of the monarch continued to have an undue weight upon the gestion of affairs. George III., at this time in his fifty-seventh year, was a prince whose mind had not received the benefits of a liberal education, and it was consequently narrow, bigoted, and obstinate. He entertained high ideas of his royal dignity and prerogative, and cherished religion as one of the chief safeguards of society. Innovation of any kind was abhorrent to him; and he naturally viewed the French Revolution, from its very outset, with hostility and uneasiness. As it wandered into its subsequent aberrations, his alarms grew more intense, until the overthrow of the monarchy and of the church, albeit of a creed he persecuted in his own dominions, excited in him uncontrollable horror. His sentiments were largely participated by the dominant class of nobility, who usurped all the real power of the State, because, with the semblance of popular forms, the government of Great Britain was purely aristocratical. Commanding both Houses of Parliament through their own votes, and those of venal nominees, the Tory nobles could uphold or displace any minister; and therefore, to maintain his post, he must succumb to their mandates, and be in reality their instrument. This dependence was extremely unpalatable to Pitt, whose

spirit was proud and lofty; and but that he himself began to quail before the dangers of French democracy and aggrandisement, he would have spurned their service, and crippled them in their high estate. When, however, the existence of social order seemed to him threatened, not in France alone, but, by her anarchical exhortations and devastating legions, over unknown extents, he formed with them that compact to suppress the Revolution abroad, and to extinguish freedom at home, which imbittered all the rest of his days, carried him to a premature grave, and compromised his reputation as a statesman. Unable or scorning to discriminate between a nation fighting for its life and liberties, and the old courts whose miserable fooleries had marched mercenary bands into fields of conflict, he analysed the armies of France, he weighed her finances, he surveyed her condition, and found encouragement in them all; but he forgot to count her population, or to reckon the force of that new incentive the spirit of democracy had imparted to it. Thus he formed a more erroneous estimate of France, and the sinews of her strength, than the Jacobins did of England; and the perils he proposed to avert by the torch of war he aggravated a thousandfold, until, at the time of his death, he could presage nothing but the inevitable ruin of his country. Not to his wisdom, certainly, or to that of his successors, was it owing that England escaped such ruin, and emerged from the contest ultimately triumphant, at an expense of treasure literally countless; but rather to her merchants and manufacturers, who taxed the world to supply the enormous funds required to continue the struggle;* and, above all, to the providential madness of the man who wielded the forces of Europe to destroy her. Yet it may be said in his exculpation that, as a minister, he had no alternative; he had held aloof from hostilities as long as he possibly could, and through superhuman firmness and sagacity only could he have been animated to prolong that neutrality. In truth, if he remained at the helm of affairs, he must needs go to war; for not only were the king and the ruling aristocracy intent upon it, but a large proportion of the middle classes was inflamed with the like passion. Very few voices indeed were heard to deprecate the scourge, and laud the advantages of peace. The Whig opposition in the House of Commons, headed by the illustrious Fox, condemned war as impolitic, unjust, and groundless; but it was shivered to an inconsiderable fragment by the defection of Burke, one of the most brilliant, profound, but erratic and excitable geniuses that ever figured on the arena of politics. He went over to the side of the minister, followed by many of the Whig nobility, and devoted his energies to intoxicate the whole nation with the delirium which had seized upon himself. Thence-

* In the last year of the war, the amount of the budget was £126,000,000 sterling.

forth the opponents of the war and the defenders of liberty were reduced to insignificance in numbers, covered with the vilest opprobrium, and exposed to vexations of the most harassing and oppressive character. The Habeas-Corpus Act was suspended, spies disseminated throughout the realm, and the French system of terror parodied, wanting only the permanent guillotine. Nobly did the handful of patriots, forsaken of the world, bear up against proscription and the frowns of adversity; they still upheld the sacred cause, and some of them were blessed with years to witness, partake, and consummate its triumph. Behold, then, the monstrous horrors of war! Independently of its necessary infernal accessories, it entails the subversion of freedom and of public morality, even in countries enjoying the benefit of a long-established government based on the very principle of national sovereignty!*

The capacity of Great Britain to undertake a great war was not at the time very promising. Her grandeur and fame had received a severe shock from the disastrous issue of the last in which she had been engaged. Both her army and navy were shown to be in a disgraceful condition of inefficiency. The former, when on a war-footing, was in great part composed of mercenaries supplied, for stipulated subsidies, by German princes, who prosecuted this extraordinary traffic with acceptable profit to their narrow exchequers. Moreover, its constitution was most vicious. Every branch of administration was deeply tainted with corruption, through the pervading demoralisation of the rotten-borough system; but the military and naval departments were more conspicuously so. The abuses of patronage were carried to a height that appears scarcely credible. It was not uncommon for a nobleman or a gentleman possessing parliamentary influence to burden the country with all his male offspring, from the moment of their birth, as officers in one of the two services; and ere they had left school, or even the nursery, they held commissions as majors and first lieutenants.† The poor and unfriended, on the other hand, stood not the slightest chance of promotion,

* It is singular that in the conflicts of politics this principle was invoked by Pitt himself against Fox in 1788. George III. had become suddenly deranged, and Fox contended that the Prince of Wales succeeded to the exercise of the sovereignty, as in the case of a demise. This doctrine Pitt strongly controverted, maintaining that the right of providing for the exercise of the sovereignty devolved upon the two Houses of Parliament, 'on the part of the nation at large, the body they represented,' and stigmatised his rival's opinion as treason to the constitution.—*Tomline's Life of Pitt*, vol. ii., p. 376. The circumstance of the Prince of Wales having ranged himself under Fox's banner was the cause of this perversion of parts, and the occasion itself affords a notable example of the obliquities of party spirit.

† 'It's only the major crying for his porridge,' was the answer of a servant girl in a Scotch family of distinction to an inquiry touching the cause of some unusual clamour in the nursery. The anecdote shows the extent to which the abuse was pushed.

however long and meritorious their services; thus emulation had no spur, and a general torpor was superinduced. The common soldiers and sailors were habitually subjected to the most brutal treatment, and the *cat* was in almost continual exercise in every regiment on land and in every ship at sea. Their comforts, likewise, were shamefully neglected; all commissariat contracts being made, not that proper supplies might be furnished, but that the contractors and their patrons might realise fortunes as rapidly as possible. It seems strange that the British aristocracy should suffer thus to languish and decay those elements of strength upon which depended the position and very existence of the country it governed; but it overlooked all considerations in the gratification of its selfishness and cupidity. It defended with tenacity, and relinquished with regret, as a bulwark of what it called 'the constitution,' the abuses of the military administration; and it yielded to a reform of the navy only after being terrified by a universal mutiny of the seamen in the very thick of the conflict (1795). Such conduct was deplorably base and culpable, proving that when any one class of a community obtains complete supremacy, whether it be a mob of *sans-culottes* or a band of nobles, it becomes blind with lust and rapacity, and regards the general interest as subservient entirely to its own immoral and exclusive purposes.* Yet a very recent lesson had been taught this aristocracy, adapted to make it forego the iniquity of its ways. Only nine years previously it had seen the United States of America emancipate themselves from the British rule, and a French and Spanish fleet sweep the Channel. Two English armies, led by men whose qualification for military command rested on their family influence, had ignominiously surrendered to the American patriots; and the English fleets had been generally foiled and worsted. Nevertheless, at the outbreak of this present war in 1793, the state of the navy had deteriorated rather than improved.† All the ships were built upon cumbrous antiquated models, and were ill-provided in every particular. If the Jacobins had not taken effectual measures to nullify the French navy by the dismissal of all its officers, the superiority of the British

* Mr Alison, in his 'History of Europe,' makes from time to time admissions singularly damaging to the cause in subservience to which he writes. Thus, speaking of the British army at this period, he says (vol. iv. p. 111, ed. 1847), 'While democratic clamour starves down the establishment to a ruinously low standard in point of amount, aristocratic cupidity paralyses the direction, and nullifies the exertions of that part which is allowed to exist.' Yet whilst repeatedly upbraiding the aristocracy with crimes of a very heinous nature, he holds they may be deplored only, at the most censured, but never repressed, much less punished. No chastisement, on the other hand, is sufficiently condign for the errors of democracy.

† Smollett's 'Roderick Random,' though a fictitious work, gives a faithful picture of the government of a ship under this régime; and the general state of the navy is strikingly elucidated in the first chapters of James's admirable work, 'The Naval History of Great Britain,' 5 vols. 8vo.

on the ocean must have been more than dubious. The two governments, in fact, seemed to vie with each other which should send out its fleets in a condition best fitting them to be captured or destroyed. The superlative skill and indomitable valour of the British seamen prevailed; but the Board of Admiralty had done its best to neutralise their qualities. The unfortunate French crews, half landmen, and without either experience or discipline, had nothing but their bravery to rely upon, and in naval combats that is by no means the main, though an essential, condition of success. Such were the circumstances under which the British navy commenced a twenty years' war, in the course of which, in spite of all the mismanagement, inaptitude, and corrupt favouritism of its rulers on shore, it achieved many wondrous exploits, whose fame will ring in the ears of posterity to the remotest era, and established for itself the undisputed mastery of the seas.

Both parties being therefore bent on war, the French Convention, less trammelled by the conventionalities and formulas of diplomacy, took the initiative, and declared it against England and her ally Holland on the 1st of February 1793. From that moment Great Britain became the soul of the grand European confederacy against France. Lavish of her money, she offered it in profusion to every power that would contribute soldiers to crush the revolutionary foe. It seemed as if the continental potentates had merely a secondary or incidental interest in the contest; to arrest the diffusion of Jacobinism, to save their territories from contamination and conquest, was henceforth less their concern than that of England, who was content to pay them for practising self-defence. All were eager, from the highest to the lowest—emperors, kings, electors, margraves—to receive her wages; and in a short time she had bound every independent state, except Switzerland, Sweden, Denmark, and the lesser Italian principalities, in a common league to annihilate republican France. Simultaneous attacks were to be made on all her frontiers; Austrian and Prussian armies, swelled by the contingents of the interminable fry of German princes—huge heterogeneous masses—were to invade along the whole course of the Rhine and by Flanders; British and Dutch were to act either separately or as auxiliaries, as the success of descents might determine; a Spanish force of 50,000 men was to pour through the gorges of the Pyrenees, and sweep across the plains of Toulouse; the king of Sardinia undertook to reconquer Savoy, and impel his forces, if he could, to Lyons, a city known to be largely imbued with anti-Jacobinical principles; and the British were to deploy their naval might on the Mediterranean shore, and attempt the seizure of Toulon. Thus was France to be enveloped by a cloud of enemies on every accessible point, and by diagonal inroads pierced to the

heart. The hosts of her invaders were numerous, and in the texts of treaties counted 500,000 combatants. To repel such an assault she had few apparent means. The first fever of military ardour had died away through the extreme sufferings to which the volunteers had been exposed by the disorganisation of the war administration. Her armies, though yet on foreign soils as conquerors, were grievously thinned by desertions, emaciated by the penury of necessaries, insubordinate by the relaxation of all discipline. On the wide range of her confines she could not muster 200,000 soldiers to oppose the multifarious hordes of her assailants, and these far from effective. In this extremity, her population once more responded to the call of patriotism. To save his country from subjugation was the first duty of every Frenchman, and he regarded not who were its rulers, if they were steadfast to vindicate the national independence. The Convention decreed a levy of 300,000 men, and twice the number pressed to enroll their names. They were not in time to prevent great reverses, but they availed to retrieve them. It was not a lack of defenders, therefore, France had to fear, but an almost total deficiency of the ordinary resources for carrying on a war. From the complete isolation in which England had placed her, she could no longer draw supplies of even the raw materials for armaments; she was afflicted with the horrors of a dearth, and she could import no foreign corn; she had no currency of intrinsic value, and no means of recruiting her finances but by issues of a paper already enormously depreciated. Never was the condition or the prospects of a country more gloomy than those of France in the spring of 1793; never was the salvation of a country wrought by such a government, terrible in its energy and sternness, demoniac in its ruthlessness and avenging fury.

The momentous campaign of 1793 was opened by Dumouriez. Immediately after the declaration of war against Holland, he left Liege, and took the command of the troops at Antwerp; whence, on the 17th February, he entered the Dutch territory. His intention was to make a bold dash upon Amsterdam, without attempting to reduce the strong fortresses which interposed. But these gave themselves up to him almost at the first summons; Klundert, Breda, and Gertruydenberg opened their gates to mere feigned attacks, in which the French had scarcely any ammunition. Immense stores of cannon, powder, and muskets were taken in them. But Dumouriez was stopped on the shore of the Brisboes, an arm of the sea he had hoped to cross by surprise, and there a peremptory order from the Convention reached him, recalling him into Belgium. His presence was needed to arrest the Prince of Coburg, the new Austrian generalissimo, who had driven his lieutenants beyond the Meuse, routed them at Maestricht and Liege, and compelled them to retreat towards Louvain and Limburg.

One of those panics to which the French were so subject at the commencement of the war had seized upon them; more than ten thousand disbanded, and fled into France, spreading the most dismal tidings. The Belgian peasants flew to arms, and threatened all that remained with extermination. Amidst such dangers, it was impossible for Dumouriez to prosecute his offensive movement in Holland. The Jacobins themselves, who had keenly urged it, in the hope of having a fresh country to plunder and revolutionise, besought him to forego it, and return to save Belgium. He joined the defeated army at Louvain, and after infusing some order into its shattered ranks, he sought to revive its confidence by assuming the offensive. He attacked and repulsed the Austrian vanguard at Tirlemont,* and then prepared to fight a pitched battle. The Prince of Coburg accepted his challenge, and they came to blows round the village of Nerwinden on the 15th of March. The French were defeated through the incapacity or treachery of Miranda, the leader of their left wing, who abandoned his position, and left the centre and right exposed to be assailed in flank. The imperial commanders, however, were not very alert at improving their advantages, and Dumouriez, with young Egalité, led back his troops the same evening to their former cantonments. The effusion of blood on both sides was considerable; the French lost upwards of 4000 killed and wounded, a few hundred prisoners, and thirty pieces of cannon; the imperialists had nearly 2000 men disabled. The result was ruinous to the republican army: completely disheartened, whole companies and battalions forsook their colours, and Dumouriez had great difficulty in keeping together the semblance of a respectable force. With his usual ingenuity, however, he contrived to make that semblance suffice; and the Prince of Coburg, slow and stupid beyond the ordinary measure of German dulness, remained in total ignorance of his forlorn condition. His forces would have melted away at the bare aspect of the Austrian eagles, yet he had nothing before him but a long and arduous retreat through a now hostile and almost insurgent country. He still showed, however, an imposing face to his pursuers with some regiments of the line; and when their vanguard pressed him too closely, he halted, and drove it back with loss, as at Louvain on the 22d. Conscious, nevertheless, of his desperate situation, he eagerly listened to a proposal made by Colonel Mack, chief of Coburg's staff, for a suspension of arms. The evacuation of Belgium seemed to the imperial general a sufficiently important object to attain, and on

* In 1823, two sisters of the name of Fernig kept a snuff-shop at Brussels, who were present in this encounter, having previously gained renown by feats of arms in the Army of the North. Dumouriez distinguished these Amazons, and ranked them among his aides-de-camp. Two singular letters between the parties are quoted by M. Guadet in Buzot's *Memoirs*, pp. 116, 117.

Dumouriez's promise to retire peaceably, he stipulated not to molest him. A more active and able commander would have pushed vigorously forward, annihilated the French army, and reduced Paris within a month, since there was no assemblage of troops to resist him, and he might have safely contented himself with masking the fortresses. Thus the war would have been terminated, the Revolution suppressed, the light of all freedom extinguished, and the despotism of royalty restored throughout Europe; but Providence struck the powers allied to effect this purpose with a degree of incapacity which is not to be paralleled in the history of the world, for it had gone forth as the irreversible decree that their inherently wicked designs should not prosper.

Dumouriez was once more, therefore, the saviour of France, though defeated and obliged to relinquish his conquests. If his successes had given umbrage to the Jacobins, his reverses failed to reinstate him in their favour. He took pains, moreover, to exasperate them; for he boldly charged upon their enormities in Belgium, and their inattention to the wants of the army, the discomfiture of his plans. He even wrested from their commissioners stores of church plate, which they had confiscated, and restored them to the Belgians, whose miseries he did all in his power to mitigate. He thus provoked their implacable animosity. It was clear that he must either destroy them, or be himself by them destroyed. He did not hesitate which alternative it behoved him to seek. He forthwith concluded a convention with Mack, whereby he agreed to deliver into the hands of the Austrians Condé or Valenciennes as a pledge, whilst he marched with his army to Paris, assisted by the imperialists as auxiliaries. There he was to set up again, as he proposed, the constitutional monarchy with young Egalité on the throne; a scheme the allies would certainly never have permitted him to realise, if he had once introduced them within the walls of Paris. He was baffled in his project, however, at the very outset. The commandant of Condé refused to obey his orders, and the garrison of Valenciennes openly declared against him. Meanwhile the commissioners of the Convention, suspicious of his views, had written for instructions, and Beurnonville in person, who had displaced the artful hypocrite Pache in the war ministry, came with a decree enjoining Dumouriez immediately to repair to Paris. They had an interview with him on the 2d April near the camp of Maulde, in which he had posted his army; and he no longer attempted to conceal from them his resolution to terminate the sanguinary reign of the Jacobins. They retired to consider what course they should pursue, and in an hour saw him again. He received them surrounded by all his general officers. The commissioners were four in number—Camus, Lamarque, Bancal, and Quinette, all deputies of the Convention. Camus addressed Dumouriez: ‘Citi-

zen general,' he said, 'are you ready to obey the decree of the National Convention, and proceed to Paris?' 'Not at this moment,' replied the latter dryly. 'Then,' exclaimed Camus, 'I declare you suspended from your functions. You are no longer general. I order that no further obedience be paid to you, and that you be arrested. I will put a seal upon your papers.' At these words a general murmur broke from the assembled officers. Dumouriez started up, and exclaimed in an angry tone, 'This is too much; it is time to put an end to such insolence.' Calling forward a file of soldiers, he said to the officer at their head, 'Arrest these four men, but see that they receive no harm. Arrest also the minister at war, and leave him his arms.' 'General Dumouriez, you are ruining the republic,' Camus ejaculated. 'It is rather you, old fool,' Dumouriez retorted. That same evening he sent the five prisoners to Tournay, and delivered them into the custody of Clairfayt, as hostages ostensibly for the safety of the royal family. But this was his last act of authority. When it came to the push, he found his officers one by one drop away from him; his soldiers, although greatly attached to him, were beset and gained by Jacobin agents, and he was reduced to the precise predicament of Lafayette after the 10th August. With incomparably greater ability than the latter, he contended vainly against a faction, horrible indeed by its atrocities, but still the visible embodiment of the national will, and in its very crimes identified with the independence of France and the success of the Revolution. After a narrow escape from capture through his horse refusing to leap a burn, whereby he was obliged to scramble over on foot, he withdrew to the Austrian head-quarters with his friend Egalité, so closing his chequered and very remarkable career. But for the inherent defect of character, Dumouriez would have been a great man. Stability and tenacity of purpose are more essential to rivet empire over men than mere talent, however superabundant and enhanced by manifold excellent qualities; thus Dumouriez fell whilst Robespierre rose. He rejected all enticements to serve against France, and it is but just to state that he had expressly stipulated with Coburg for the integrity of her territory. He stands acquitted, therefore, of guilty participation in the real designs of that commander, which he avowed soon afterwards, since England and Austria had already agreed to dismember France, under the imposing pretence of providing 'indemnities for the past and security for the future.' It would seem that Prussia was not intended to share in the spoil, her aggrandisement being more odious in the eyes of Austria than the Revolution itself; and the exclusion created so much indignation in the breast of her greedy monarch, that he became lukewarm in the cause of the coalition, and revolved how he might decently discard it. He reverted with longing eyes to those

Polish provinces that lay so temptingly in the fertile basin of the Vistula, which he might have by merely stretching out his hand to seize them; and he asked himself what he was doing on the Rhine—a tool to gain acquisitions for others, when the call of profit was so decidedly at the other end of Europe. Thus the rapacious and selfish views of these allies, combined, as they professed, to curb democratical ambition, generated discord among them, poisoned their counsels, and brought upon them a memorable retribution.

Meanwhile Paris and all France were in a ferment greater than had marked any era of the Revolution. With so many external enemies, domestic dissension, instead of being calmed, raged more violently than ever. The contest between the Girondins and Jacobins was virtually decided by the death of the king, but it was no part of Jacobin policy to rest satisfied with a partial victory. The complete overthrow and extermination of foes was the inexorable maxim of that society, and of its great leader Robespierre. Yet such was the increasing wildness of ideas growing to mark the Revolution, that it nearly eluded their control, and would have done so but for their admirable organisation. The higher classes of society had disappeared, and the fatal term of *aristocrats* was now applied to all who did not belong to, or affect to assimilate with, the very lowest orders of the community. Hence *sans-culottism* (literally, *breechlessness*) came to be the test of true republican virtue. A clean, well-dressed man was an aristocrat, and necessarily an enemy of the *sans-culottes*, who were pronounced to be the only pure portion of the human species.* The ground was thus becoming dangerous even for Robespierre, who was himself rather addicted to fine clothing. An inferior race of demagogues was springing up—Ronsin, Momoro, Hebert, and others—to meet this yet more levelling passion; and the day might not be distant when even he and Danton would make the pilgrimage of the guillotine with the brand of aristocrats. He had therefore not only to crush the Girondins and wreak his vengeance on them, but to keep in check the unruly and mutinous spirits that were rising beneath him. These had their theatre of operations in the sections and the Cordelier Club, in which disguised royalists mingled to promote the progress of anarchy. Whilst the principal accusation against the Girondins was a design to divide France into a federal State, through the violence of the ultra-revolutionists Paris was actually dislocated after that fashion. Each section assumed to be independent, and competent to obey or disobey the decrees of

* Anacharsis Clootz, who, with Tom Paine, was a member of the Convention, though both were foreigners, expressed this feeling in his peculiar phraseology. 'A Gallophile at all times,' he exclaimed one day; 'my heart is French, my soul *sans-culotte*.'

the Convention as it judged expedient. The distress prevailing among the population of Paris conduced to inflame this spirit of disorder. From a gay and luxurious capital, that city had changed to the abode of exaggerated frugality, and the alteration had a prejudicial effect on those who lived by the labour of their hands. Joined to a lack of employment, bread itself was scarce. The harvest of 1792 had not been defective, but from the confusion in which the whole country was involved, the operations of commerce were impeded, and in some parts altogether suspended. The farmers, proverbially cautious and timid, held back their grain from the markets, both for fear of popular robbery, and through repugnance to take paper money, which they could not bring themselves to consider an equivalent for their old-prized *écus*. The towns consequently soon began to suffer from a want of provisions, and especially Paris. To feed the impatient and disorderly populace of that city, had been a difficulty ever since the commencement of the Revolution; and during the winter of 1792, it required unremitting exertions on the part of Roland and two committees of subsistence sitting at the Convention and the Commune. Roland had retired from the ministry after the execution of Louis, and that department of government became utterly disorganised like all the rest. The dearth grew more severe, and the price of commodities rose prodigiously. Assignats formed the only circulating medium, and they had various exchanges. The labourer and artisan received their wages in them at the nominal value, but shopkeepers and traders charged upon their articles all the difference of their depreciation. Thus to the ignorant populace it appeared that prices were unnaturally enhanced, and that the dealers must be making enormous profits. Their orators encouraged them in this idea, and taught them to demand a *maximum* to be affixed on prices. The suggestion met with ready concurrence, and was rapturously adopted by the sections, who sent clamorous deputations for its enforcement to the Convention, the Commune, and the Jacobin Club, which were regarded as co-existent powers. The Girondins necessarily opposed the proposition, as they were conscious of its fatal consequences to the deluded people themselves; Robespierre likewise denounced it, and for the first time drew upon himself the imprecations of the galleries. Thus refused what seemed to them a simple and just expedient to restore the old equilibrium, the people were filled with indignation. They could not understand how it came to pass that now, when they themselves reigned, when their own cherished leaders were dominant, and they had cut off the head of their oppressor, they were subjected to more grievous sufferings than at any former period. It could arise only from some monstrous hidden treachery, and they cried out with fury against the rich, and against forestallers engaged in a plot with royalists

and the foreign enemy to starve them. Such was their temper and estimate of things, when Marat addressed them in the words of exhortation. Death and violence were the only means of government known to him, and he recommended them to a populace whose understanding they suited. 'In every country,' he said in his journal of the 25th February, 'where the rights of the people are not vain titles consigned to an empty declaration, the pillage of a few shops, and the hanging of forestallers at their doors, would put an end to malversations which reduce five millions of men to despair, and cause thousands to perish of famine. Will the deputies of the people never learn anything but to talk? will they never provide substantial remedies for evils?' The hint had an electrical effect: on the very next day a general plunder of the shops took place, which continued for several hours without any attempt to stop it. The excesses of an unbridled mob are not only ruinous to the immediate victims, but usually recoil disadvantageously on the perpetrators and instigators. In this case it was not so, or at least until after the measure of crime was fuller. Robespierre, who, with a view to his ulterior purposes, dared not condemn what it was embarrassing to vindicate, threw the odium of the pillage on the royalists and Girondins, and maintained that, on the part of the people, it was only an insurrection directed against the betrayers of their country, which was to be approved; and that even were it otherwise, the people 'could do no harm,' a doctrine once applied to kings, but really true only of the sovereign people. Thus were the perpetrators not merely absolved, but proclaimed to be absolutely impeccable. The instigator, Marat, was applauded to the skies, and doubly confirmed in the affections of the sans-culottes. The impotent wrath of the Girondins only exalted him in his anarchical pre-eminence. They decreed him under accusation, but appointed no tribunal to try him. This proof of their animosity, to which he had often dared them, incited him to yet more furious manifestations; and on the occasion of an address he had signed on behalf of the Jacobins, invoking an appeal to arms against the Convention as the seat of counter-revolution, they were so incensed, that, with the concurrence of the Plain, they passed a formal decree of impeachment against him, and sent him before the revolutionary tribunal. It was certainly difficult for them to preserve their temper at the atrocious language and insolent bearing of this abominable creature; but still he was a member of the Convention, and his impeachment was a violation of the inviolability attached to the representatives of the people, and was sure, moreover, to end in abortiveness and discomfiture. No step, therefore, could be more imprudent. Marat was accompanied to the tribunal by an immense multitude, who would have torn judges and jurymen to pieces if they had pronounced a sentence of condemnation. 'It

is not a criminal who appears before you,' he said audaciously to the judges; 'it is the apostle and martyr of liberty, against whom a knot of factious schemers have obtained a decree of accusation.' They at once acquitted him, and he was carried from the court, borne aloft on a chair, and his brows encircled with a wreath of laurel, to the Convention, into the body of which the crowd pressed with tumultuous clamours. 'We bring you Marat, the brave Marat, the friend of the people,' cried a huge barbarian, brandishing an enormous axe; 'the people will always be with Marat.' He was passed into the arms of his fellow-Mountaineers, who embraced him with ardour. The mob, driving the deputies from their seats, called upon him to speak. He mounted the tribune, crowned as a conqueror, and addressed the Convention. 'I appear before you,' he said, 'as one accused who has triumphantly justified himself. I offer you a pure heart, which will continue to defend, with all the energy of which it is capable, the rights of man and of the people.' Afterwards the mob defiled through the hall, exulting with shouts and gestures over the humiliation of the national representatives.

The government was thus rapidly verging to downright anarchy. The Girondins, with a majority in the Convention, were powerless; and the Jacobins, until they could gain the mastery in that body, laboured to depreciate its authority. Hence they maintained the Commune, and even the sections, in rebellious independence. They had made their creature Pache mayor, and moulded the Parisian National Guard to their views, by weeding the battalions of all the more wealthy and respectable citizens. On the other hand, the departments generally manifested a determination to support the Convention. In the principal cities of the republic—Orleans, Lyons, Toulon, Marseilles, Bordeaux, Nantes, Rouen—the same strife was raging between the Jacobins and the Girondins as at Paris; but the latter were in great preponderance, and threatened a hostile movement against Paris, for the emancipation of the national representation. The royalists failed not to foment these dissensions, and strove to derive from them the means of making a decisive anti-revolutionary effort. The flames of civil war were therefore ready to burst forth in almost every part of France; and its long-smouldering embers had at length actually exploded in the Morbihan and La Vendée, where the royalist flag was raised, not again to be lowered until after years of barbarous and desolating warfare. In this situation the aggression of the powers of Europe again saved the Revolution. The Jacobins were inspired with an energy which, but that it was sullied with the deepest dye of crime, would command the undivided admiration of mankind. The defeat of Nerwinden, and the retreat of Dumouriez, animated them with a desperate courage; and before the imminent danger of foreign con-

quest, the discord of factions was for a moment lulled. Danton, who was not haunted with that rancorous hatred and everlasting suspicion which brooded in Robespierre's morose mind, endeavoured to effect a reconciliation with the Girondins, in order that all might unite in the common object of the national defence. A committee of twenty-five members was appointed by the Convention, armed with extensive powers to provide for the public safety, and composed of the leaders of the two parties in nearly equal proportions. But Robespierre refused to act in concert with men whom he so cordially detested, and whom he really believed to be leagued in conspiracies with the enemies of the Revolution. The defection of Dumouriez strengthened his malevolent impressions. That event, coupled with the arrest of the commissioners, naturally excited an extraordinary commotion. It roused the revolutionary fever to the highest pitch, sweeping off the unfortunate Girondins as its first victims. The immediate cry of the Jacobins was for a centralisation of the powers of the government, and, as Marat expressed it, '*for an organisation of the despotism of liberty to counteract the despotism of kings.*' They therefore proposed the formation of a committee of nine members, to meet and deliberate in secret, and endowed with absolute authority. In vain the Girondins opposed the measure as the establishment of a fearful tyranny; it was carried against them by the votes of the Plain, which joined the Jacobins both from intimidation and from a conviction that the salvation of the country could be effected only by an omnipotent executive. Thus was created, on the 6th April 1793, the famous 'Committee of Public Safety,' which bears so conspicuous a place in the French Revolution. Its first members were Barrère, Delmas, Bréard, Cambon, Lindet, Jean-de-Bric, Danton, Guiton-Morveau, Treilhard, and Lacroix—the majority belonging to the Plain, with a strong admixture from the Mountain. A new criminal tribunal was instituted at the same time called the Revolutionary Tribunal, invested with extraordinary powers to try and condemn offenders against the Revolution, and against liberty and equality, the judges and jurymen of which were appointed by the Convention. Fresh decrees, likewise, were passed against priests and emigrants; domiciliary visits were ordered throughout France, for the purpose of seizing *suspected* aristocrats; a war tax was imposed on the rich, and the sans-culottes directed to be armed with pikes and muskets, at the expense of the class included under that arbitrary denomination. Thus was carried out the purpose proclaimed by Danton, who, gorged with the blood of September, wished to avert a second massacre, and yet, as he said, to overawe the internal enemies of the republic.

The ruling axiom of the Jacobins was implacability, and they justified it on the plea that in the eyes of domestic enemies and

of foreign cabinets moderation was deemed the proof and result of weakness. Accordingly, in this great crisis, moderation was a crime equally heinous with royalism, aristocratism, or constitutionalism; and the Girondins were manifestly within the category. They had long been marked out by all the force of calumny for the vengeance of the Parisian populace, whose manifold sufferings were imputed to their traitorous machinations. They formed the last barrier against the rule of sans-culottism; and although they struggled manfully, they were necessarily overpowered. Paris was the seat and focus of the Revolution; once removed from there, it had straightway perished. Yet they could have succeeded only by transferring the Convention to a provincial town, or by surrounding themselves with a departmental guard sufficient to protect them from violence. Both schemes they had projected, and in both been foiled. They had no other resource but their reason and their eloquence, most frail safeguards against the wrath of uncultivated masses. By a retributive fatality, the death of Louis XVI. weighed upon them like a nightmare: they had endeavoured to save him—therefore were they traitors; they had adjudged him to die—therefore were they cowards and imbeciles. It suited the Jacobins to represent them in the first capacity; and no sooner was Louis's head fairly off, than the sections were incited to demand the punishment and expulsion from the Convention of the *appellants*—that is, of those who had voted for the appeal to the people. Twenty-two of these were particularly enumerated, comprehending all the distinguished leaders of the Gironde. So early as the 10th March, an insurrection had been planned to enforce compliance with this demand; but from accidental circumstances—chiefly, it is said, from a heavy fall of rain—it at that time failed. Then came the transitory truce; and it was not until after Dumouriez's flight that the storm again arose against the Girondins. They were no more implicated in that general's treason than the Jacobins themselves; but it afforded Robespierre the opportunity he had long desired to discharge the accumulated venom of his malice. On the 10th April he mounted the tribune, and reviewed the conduct of the Girondins from the commencement of the Revolution, finding it at every era indicative of guilt and hypocrisy. He himself had been ever pure and virtuous; alone he had contended for the rights of the people in the Constituent Assembly against the Lafayettes, the Duponts, and the Barnaves; alone he had condemned the butchery of Nancy by Bouillé, and the slaughter of the Champ de Mars; and what had been his reward?—calumny, incessant calumny.* He

* Meillan pretty accurately strikes off part of Robespierre's character. He says—'He was eternally exclaiming against calumny, and never ceased to calumniate. Jealous, proud, harsh, obstinate, violent, and sanguinary, he would have immolated three-fourths of the human race to realise upon the

had braved it, and outlived it; but in proportion to the severity of the trials he had undergone in the cause of liberty and equality, he must take care they were not endangered, and that he denounced in time their inveterate enemies. Such were Brissot, Guadet, Vergniaud, Gensonné, Pétion, Louvet, Lanjuinais, and the whole right side, as their lives and actions demonstrated. He first of all identified them with Lafayette and the *burgher aristocracy*, saying that though the men were changed, the system was still the same. 'Every step of theirs,' he proceeded, 'has been marked by a departure from the principles of the Revolution: never have they marched with it, except when constrained by necessity. They monopolised the fruits of the victory of the 10th August, by restoring their minions, Roland, Servan, and Claviere, to the offices of the ministry, whilst they scrupled not to calumniate the municipality of Paris, which had in reality alone gained the victory.' He then charged them with a design to restore royalty, even after the 10th August, by proposing to nominate a preceptor for the Dauphin; they suspended the tyrant when they ought to have deposed him; they delayed his trial for four months, and then endeavoured to shield him by the basest arts of chicanery and intrigue. 'And the just punishment of the tyrant,' he exclaimed, 'that solitary and glorious triumph of the republic, has postponed only for a moment their unwearied activity against the sovereignty of the people. Won by their arts, the very generals of the republic have betrayed us. Where are now Lafayette and Dumouriez? How often have they been denounced as traitors in the patriotic clubs? Leagued with the court, this faction alone dragged us into the war; the Jacobins uniformly opposed it. Their object was plain: they sought to expose us to the invasion of the Austrians, who had promised a congress and the burgher constitution of 1791. Not finding that sufficient, they had ended by lighting up the flames of civil war.' In all their delinquencies they were the accomplices of *Egalité*, old and young; 'for who,' he asked, 'accompanied Dumouriez to Brussels?' He concluded, therefore, with a motion for the proscription of the Orleans family and the Girondist deputies. Vergniaud rose immediately to reply, and in a strain of finished eloquence unmasked the hideous malignity of Robespierre's accusations. He taunted him with his own vile cowardice. On the 10th August, when the Girondins deposed the king, and upset the monarchy under which France had groaned for so many centuries, where was this hero of liberty? Concealed in a cellar. When the Prussians were in the Argonne, who forgot the dangers of the country, and trembled for his own safety alone? This same hero; for he intreated Barbaroux to procure him an asylum in

remaining fourth his system of government and his projects of ambition.'—*Memoires*, p. 5.

Marseilles. His self-praise, therefore, was as ridiculous as his calumnies were atrocious. Guadet followed, and retorted upon the Mountain the charge of implication with Dumouriez. 'Who was his constant associate when in Paris?' he exclaimed. 'Who took him to the Jacobin Club, accompanied him to the theatres, feasted him with entertainments? Who but your own Danton?' 'Ah!' cried Danton, 'thou attackest me; thou knowest not my strength!' Confusion ensued, and the Assembly broke up in one of its tempests of agitation.

In the conflicts of the tribune Robespierre delighted; when backed by the applauses and safe in the physical force of the galleries, the outpourings of malevolence, the distortions and imputations of motives, were sweet to him; but the resources of his character there ended. He shrank from personal danger with womanly timidity, and not a single event in the Revolution can properly be attributed to him. He was skilful in seizing the fruits of crimes; but if they had failed, he would have been foremost to abjure them. With all the virulence of his animosity against the Girondins, he scrupled to violate the sanctuary of the Convention by a forcible abduction; and yet, holding their removal necessary to the safety of the Revolution, he was perplexed, and redoubled his lamentations over the misfortunes of the country, nourishing traitors in the very bosom of its representation. Danton, too, now a member of the Committee of Public Safety, was opposed to open outrage; and Marat became the hero of the movement which was to crush the Girondins. He exhibited an audacity in action commensurate with the ferocity of his writings. He presided at several of the sections, where they passed resolutions declaring the Convention rotten in its core and unfit to govern until it had undergone the process of purification. Thirty-five of the forty-eight sections adopted these resolutions, as did also the Jacobin Club and the Commune. The latter declared itself in a state of permanent revolution, established a committee of correspondence to arouse all the municipalities of France, and distributed through Paris and in the departments copies of its petition against the Girondist leaders. This petition embodied the principal accusations against that party, and concluded with a demand for the expulsion of twenty-two of its members from the Convention. The sections unanimously concurred in it; and on the 15th April Pache appeared at the bar, and presented it in the name of the Commune and the sections of Paris. The galleries were filled with sans-culottes, who bellowed tumultuous plaudits as the names of the proscribed deputies were enunciated. Undismayed by the imminence of their peril, they were all at their posts. Vergniaud advanced to the front, and by a vehement invective stimulated the courage of the Plain. He moved that the petition should

be declared calumnious, and despite the furious ejaculations of the Mountain, the body of the Assembly rose and carried the vote by acclamation. Robespierre's brother then moved that the honours of the sitting should be awarded to the petitioners. This was strenuously opposed by the right side, and an angry discussion followed, to the accompaniment of uproar, which continued till near midnight. Wearied and disgusted, the great majority of the deputies retired; the phalanx of the Mountain alone stood firm; and the petitioners, already branded as calumniators, were ultimately received within the bar, and admitted to the honours of the sitting. Thus the affair ended for the time; but hostilities were openly declared, and they could terminate only by the complete prostration of one or other of the parties.

The Commune became the centre of all the movements directed against the Convention. In several of the sections it was already proposed to march with an armed force, and seize by violence the twenty-two deputies: in others more temperate counsels prevailed, and the anarchists were outvoted. Frightful scenes occurred in these assemblies; all the fiercest passions of men in the highest excitement were aroused, and Paris was one vast field of belligerents. Every one went armed: the members of the Convention sat with pistols and daggers, for they knew not how soon they might have to use them in self-defence: anxiety and alarm were depicted on every countenance. Disastrous tidings from the seats of war added to this horrible agitation. The Commune proceeded to exercise all the powers of sovereignty; it commanded the levy of armies of sans-culottes, imposed a forced loan on the rich, and instituted a committee to prepare lists of suspected persons to be disarmed and incarcerated. Then, as in September of the year before, arose that fearful cry as to leaving traitors behind; and it was easy for the anarchists to direct it against the Girondins. An extraordinary assembly was formed at the Mairie, composed of the most violent fanatics, comprising members of the municipality and the sections, and which assumed the title of the Central Revolutionary Committee. This assembly superseded the Commune, as the focus of insurrection. Pache presided over it, and the project of *Septembrising* the Girondins—no longer to the limited number of twenty-two, but by a swoop of 300—was canvassed without any attempt at disguise. At the Cordeliers also, similar sentiments were expressed, being rendered there yet more revolting by having women for their vociferous expounders. On the 18th May these proceedings were denounced in the Convention by Guadet, who, deeming the long-threatened crisis at hand, implored his colleagues to take a courageous determination. He proposed to annul the authorities of Paris, to constitute a new

municipality, and to convoke at Bourges the substitute-members* of the Convention, to form a national assembly, in case of the dissolution of the Convention. This would have been a very effective stroke, if it had been possible to effect it; but in truth it was of too decisive a character to suit the temperament of the Plain. Barrère, as the organ of the Committee of Public Safety, recommended a more moderate course, which consisted in appointing a committee of twelve, to report on the conduct of the Commune, to examine into plots against the national representation, and to apprehend their authors and abettors. This was agreed to, and the committee at once named, being composed of members of the right side. It commenced its labours with an activity and boldness that somewhat daunted the enemies of the Convention. These finding themselves watched and cramped in their machinations, cried aloud against tyranny, and proclaimed the reign of a new Inquisition. Hitherto, in every phase of the Revolution, aggression had been crowned with success, and of its value the antagonist parties were aware. The committee struck the first blow: it caused to be apprehended two police administrators who had borne conspicuous parts in the debates of the Central Revolutionary Committee, and also the miscreant Hebert, a member of the municipality, who preached in his diabolical journal, the *Pere Duchesne*, the murder of all the Girondins. This act of vigour caused for the moment some consternation, but it speedily gave way to the wildest exasperation. On the 27th May, the Convention was besieged by a vast multitude clamouring for the liberation of 'the magistrates of the people;' deputation after deputation appeared at the bar, demanding it in the name of the sections; the abrogation of the committee of twelve, and the punishment of its members, were likewise insisted upon. One of the speakers thus addressed the Assembly:—'We ask from you our brother, our friend; him who possesses our confidence, him who has always told us the truth, him whom we have always credited. Our dearest supports have been torn from us; they groan in the fetters of a despotic committee, as we formerly groaned under the yoke of a tyrant. We demand their liberation in the name of the country; we answer with our heads for innocent citizens, who cannot be suffered longer to endure the horrors of imprisonment.' Isnard presided in the early part of the sitting, and he sternly rebuked these seditious petitioners. He said—'France has confided her representatives to the city of Paris, and expects that they will be there in safety. If the national representation be violated by one of

* Called in French the *suppléans*. They were elected at the same time as the deputies, but varied in number in the different electoral districts. They were intended to supply vacancies, as they occurred by death or otherwise, and many were called to recruit the ranks of the Convention before its dissolution.

those conspiracies with which we have been surrounded since the 10th March, and of which the magistrates have been the last to apprise us, I declare, in the name of the republic, that Paris will experience the vengeance of France, and be erased from the list of cities.' These words stirred up the blood of Danton: starting to his feet, and clenching his fist at Isnard, he shouted out—'And I declare, too, that such effrontery is too gross to be borne: we will resist you! No further truce between the Mountain and the slaves who would have saved the tyrant!''* This vehement outburst convulsed the galleries; the president was assailed with torrents of hooting, and the mob, instigated by the Mountain, giving token of a frantic rage that would soon break through all bounds, the members of the Plain gathered around and besought him to vacate the chair. He yielded to their importunities, and was succeeded by Herault de Séchelles. This new president was more fitted by his birth and manners to rule over a conclave of magnates than a pandemonium of sans-culottes; he was one of those who sought to atone for a large patrimony, superior descent, and refined breeding, by affecting an exaggerated revolutionism. He replied to the brawlers of the sections in the language becoming a Mountaineer. 'The force of reason and the force of the people,' he said, 'are the same thing. You come at this moment to reclaim justice; it is the most sacred of your duties. Representatives of the people, we promise you justice, and we shall render it to you.' The tide of influence swept to the Jacobins; the Plain was effectually intimidated; and half an hour after midnight, amid the prolonged cheering of the Mountain and all the assembled rabble, it was decreed that the patriots imprisoned by the committee of twelve should be set at liberty, and the committee itself annulled.

On the following day the Girondins mustered all their strength, and with greater courage than discretion revoked the decree of the preceding night, and reintegrated the committee. After so signal a proof of their impotency to resist violence, this was to precipitate their fate. The restoration of royalty could have scarcely caused a more furious outburst of wrath. The sovereignty of the people was clearly at stake against the projected tyranny of the Convention. Insurrection had become a holy duty, and it could no longer be deferred. Prompt measures were taken, and one was completely organised for the 31st. The primary and avowed object was the annihilation of the dreaded committee; the ulterior and concealed design the destruction of the Girondins. In the confusion of authorities that had so long prevailed, a body

* Outrageous epithets were used with such license in the Convention, that a decree had been passed, on the 24th May, prohibiting, under pain of expulsion, those most frequently in vogue, such as *faction*, *villain*, *miscreant*, &c.—*Toulongeon*, vol. iii. p. 385.

of electors had continued to meet at the old archiepiscopal palace, or Evêché, and distinguished itself for the inflammatory character of its resolutions. With it the Revolutionary Committee of the Mairie amalgamated, and the conjunct association pronounced itself endued with all the powers of the sovereign people. It declared Paris in a state of insurrection, and its constituted authorities deposed. In obedience to this mandate, the mayor and the whole council-general of the Commune abdicated their functions, but were immediately reinstated, with plenary insurrectionary powers. Santerre having taken his departure for La Vendée, the National Guard was without a commander-in-chief. Henriot, commander of the battalion of the section Sans-culotte, who had attracted notice by the eminent part he bore in the massacres of September, was appointed to fill the post, and forty sous a day were assigned to all patriots serving in the ranks until the public safety was secured. At three in the morning of the 31st the tocsin was sounded at the Evêché and the Hotel de Ville, the muster drums were beaten in all the sections, and the great alarm-gun fired from the Pont-Neuf. The Convention assembled early, and was speedily invested on all sides by 40,000 armed men. A deputation representing the department of Paris first appeared at the bar, to announce that the movement was simply a *moral insurrection*, designed to retrieve the fair fame of Paris, which had, for its pretended iniquities, been threatened to be erased from the list of cities; that property and persons were under the safeguard of the sans-culottes; and that the demands of the people would be made known in the course of the day. Vergniaud flew to the tribune. 'Whatever be the issue of this day's conflict,' he exclaimed, 'it will lead to the loss of liberty. Let us swear, then, to remain true to our duty, and to die at our post rather than desert the public weal.' All the members rose and pledged themselves to die at their posts. A deputation from the insurrectional Commune next presented itself. A great plot had been discovered, it said, but the people had risen to crush the liberticide projects of the counter-revolutionists. The Commune had taken measures adequate to the crisis, and it sought to have a place of conference appointed, to meet commissioners of the Convention and the Committee of Public Safety, that they might take counsel together. It had awarded forty sous a day to the battalions of sans-culottes until the plans of the traitors were effectually foiled, and this payment it doubted not the Convention would provide. Guadet, ever the most fearless and impassioned of his party, mounted to the tribune. 'The Commune,' he observed, 'has made a slight mistake in a word: instead of having discovered a plot, it has undertaken one.' This served as the signal of tumult. The Mountain and the galleries sent forth hideous yells. In vain Guadet raised his voice; his sentences

were drowned in clamour. The president at length put the question to the vote, and it was decreed that the requests of the Commune should be complied with. This was in reality to yield the vantage-ground; for the legality, so to speak, of the insurrection was thereby affirmed. Vergniaud added to the effect of this step by a most singular proposition. Either his imagination was affected by the orderly demeanour of the armed bands around the Convention, or perceiving that a spirit of uncertainty reigned among them, and that, for the most part, they were ignorant on what account they had been assembled, he hoped by cajolery to propitiate them and win their confidence. He astonished friends and foes alike by exclaiming, in an apparent paroxysm of fervour, 'What is passing before our eyes is sufficient to make manifest how dearly Paris is attached to liberty. The streets offer the most glorious spectacle; numerous patrols move to and fro; the greatest order reigns. I move, therefore, that you decree the sections of Paris have deserved well of the country, by maintaining tranquillity on this day of crisis.' The Mountain was puzzled how to treat this motion; Robespierre scowled with vexation, but did not venture to oppose it. By a unanimous vote it was passed, and copies were ordered to be placarded, and sent to the forty-eight sections. A few moments afterwards, the flag of battle was hoisted. A deputation from these same sections, united with the department and the Commune, came to notify their imperious demands. The orator of the joint deputations, L'Huillier, delivered a long harangue. 'It is time at length,' he said, 'to terminate the struggle of patriots against the scoundrels who continually assail them; the reason of the people revolts against such perverseness. Let its enemies tremble! Its majestic anger is ready to burst forth; let them tremble! The whole universe will shudder at its vengeance! We declare to you that, after having combated and overthrown despotism on the immortal day of the 10th August, we will combat to the last gasp all the tyrants who may aim to re-establish it, be they who they may. Such is our profession of faith!' He concluded by demanding a decree of impeachment against Roland, Lebrun, and Claviere; the members of the committee of twelve; the twenty-two deputies previously denounced by the Commune; and, generally, against 'all the abettors of royalty.' The president replied to him, and the honours of the sitting were awarded to the petitioners. Immediately a flood of rabble poured into the body of the hall, and mingled with the deputies. Many climbed to the top of the Mountain, and crowded with exultation. The national representation was indeed stormed and degraded. 'The Convention is no longer free!' exclaimed several voices on the right side. Vergniaud moved that it should go forth, and claim the protection of the armed force surrounding it. Robespierre feared the effect of so solemn

a proceeding. His prey was nearly in his grasp, and yet it might elude him. By wasting time, and exciting a tumult, he thought to prevail. He mounted the tribune, and expatiated with studied length upon all and sundry the topics that were so familiar to him. Vergniaud, impatient to have his motion put, cried out, 'Conclude, conclude!' 'Yes!' retorted Robespierre, in a flow of ready invective not characteristic of him; 'I am about to conclude, and against you! Against you, who, after the revolution of the 10th August, would have sent to the scaffold those who accomplished it! Against you, who have never ceased to provoke the destruction of Paris! Against you, who wished to save the tyrant! Against you, who conspired with Dumouriez! Against you, whose criminal vengeance has aroused those very cries of indignation which you attribute as a crime to those who are your victims! Conclude indeed! My conclusion is for a decree of impeachment against all the accomplices of Dumouriez, and against those designated by the petitioners!' The sans-culottes hailed this sally in a delirium of joy; they bore their triumphant champion to the most conspicuous place on the benches of the Mountain, and formed around him a guard, as if his precious life were in jeopardy. Yet the ultimate victory was not to the strong on that day. Barrère contrived to pluck it at the eleventh hour. The ruling motive of the insurrection was the tyranny of the committee of twelve; so the battalions of the sections had been told—so the groups of sans-culottes themselves believed. In the name of the Committee of Public Safety, Barrère proposed its suppression, accompanied by a decree putting the public force in permanent requisition, and ordaining the Committee of Safety to act in concert with the constituted authorities of Paris in pursuing the plots denounced at the bar during that sitting. These measures were adopted; and upon being communicated to the battalions and crowd outside, they deemed the day won, and giving a volley of cheers, began forthwith to disperse. The hour, too, was getting late; darkness covered the hall of the Assembly, and it was no longer possible to distinguish the deputies from the intruders. No forms of debate or suffrage could be observed; and Robespierre himself, being the fourth president who had occupied the chair during the protracted diet, pronounced the adjournment of the Convention to the ensuing day.

The 31st of May, therefore, ended undoubtedly in the defeat of the Convention, in its prostration to popular violence, but still it left the Girondins unscathed within it. It was an outrage that honest patriots might deplore, a baffled project that anarchists murmured at. Still, to keep up the delusion among the people, the Commune affected to regard it as a great victory, and ordered a general illumination of the city. Processions of men and women perambulated the streets singing songs of triumph; and the

Mountain took part in one of them, with Robespierre at its head. But these demonstrations were merely to fan the excitement of the masses, for the determination to strike the final and decisive blow was neither foregone nor prorogued. The motion of the misguided Vergniaud was proclaimed with the flourish of trumpets, and duplicates transmitted to the neighbouring communes, particularly of Versailles, that they might hurry to deserve the like eulogium. 'The sections of Paris have deserved well of the country; resistance to oppression is the most sacred of duties!' was printed in brazen characters, and inscribed on streaming banners. Sunday being a day of idleness, was always propitious to revolutionary movements. One occurring on the 2d of June, it was fixed for the consummation of the plot. Saturday was employed in fomenting agitation, and perfecting precautions to insure the success of the enterprise. The assembly of the *Évêché* had delegated a committee to take measures of execution, with which Marat now openly associated himself. Henriot also was in constant communication with it, and he held the armed force at its disposal. This armed force was not considered sufficient, as it had proved lukewarm and indifferent on the 31st. Several battalions of *sans-culottes* were at Courbevoie, intended for La Vendée. These were recalled as ready for any extremity, and to be relied on in the perpetration of all atrocities. Several companies of cannoneers were mustered, desperate ruffians, to whom no horror or crime could come amiss, who were to encompass the Tuileries with a battering-train of 160 guns. At intervals during the day, the tocsin was rung and the *générale* beaten in the sections, in order that no repose might slacken the energies of revolt. These sounds were to the Girondins the knell of destruction, and they recognised it but too well. The proscribed among them met together, and consulted as to what course they should pursue. To fly into the departments, whilst yet there was time to escape, and commence hostilities against Paris, was an idea that naturally suggested itself to minds exasperated by the sense of wrong and oppression; but it was a doleful alternative, and to be justified only after all hope of accommodation was extinguished. The example of the Roman senators sitting in their curule chairs to receive the barbarian soldiers of Gaul recurred to the imagination of some, and it was proposed that they should brave death in the heart of the Convention. They certainly had very often sworn to do so; but whilst yet distracted and perplexed, the booming of the alarm-gun startled them from deliberation, and they dispersed, flying to different places of refuge. The majority repaired to the house of Meillan, a deputy, where they passed the night under arms.

At midnight, Marat mounted the belfry of the Hotel de Ville and tolled the great bell of the tower. It was the signal for the

toesin to be rung from every steeple in Paris. All night long these dismal clangs resounded, drums beat to arms, and the immense gun of the Pont-Neuf vomited its terrific bellow. The Commune, the Jacobins, the Evéché, and the sections were all in permanence: had Coburg and York been at the gates of Paris, no greater means could have been taken to express the imminence of danger. By eight in the morning of the 2d, nearly 80,000 men were assembled in arms, ranged for the most part on the great square of the Hotel de Ville. Henriot was at their head, and he ascended to the council-chamber of the Commune, whom he assured that the people had sworn not to lay down their arms until they had obtained the arrest of the conspiring deputies. The Commune was glad to hear that such pure patriotism animated the citizens, and Henriot departed to put his army in motion. It was ten o'clock before he reached the field of battle, and completed his investment at every avenue of the fortress of the Convention. That body was already in session, but the principal members of the Gironde were absent. The intrepid Lanjuinais refused to be scared; the fiery Barbaroux, too, broke from his friends, and rushed to throw defiance at his enemies; the imperturbable Isnard took his place as on an ordinary occasion; Pétion hid himself, as on days of yore; and his companions in proscription imitated his example. The Mountain was in great force, and radiant with expectation of a fruitful catastrophe. Profound quiet marked the early part of the sitting; with the toesin yet pealing, and the din of military preparation around, sundry communications from the armies were read, and votes taken on their contents. Speedily the influx of sans-culottes into the galleries gave token that the serious drama was about to commence. A deputation from the 'constituted revolutionary authorities of the department of Paris' was announced to be in attendance. Lanjuinais darted to the tribune. 'I move,' he cried, 'that all the revolutionary authorities of Paris be annulled; that all they have done during the last three days be quashed; and that all who arrogate an authority contrary to law be put out of the pale of the law.' He spoke, and instantly the mine of passion exploded. 'Come down from the tribune, or I'll hurl you from it!' exclaimed the furious Legendre. Several of the Mountain offered to assist him in executing his threat. Lanjuinais spoke on; he depicted the Convention as enthralled by assassins, as sitting for four days under uplifted daggers. 'Down with the scoundrel!' vociferated the galleries. Legendre, the younger Robespierre, Drouet, and others, sprang up the steps of the tribune, and attempted to drag him from it. He held fast by the cornice, and resisted their efforts. Such a scene was unique even in the French National Convention. The galleries harked on the assailants, the Plain uttered indignant cries of *Shame!* the

president covered his head in grief. The latter was allowed a hearing. 'Such a scene,' he said, 'is most afflicting. Liberty will perish if you continue such conduct.' He called Legendre and his associates to order, and they left Lanjuinais in possession of the tribune. Beyond exhibiting his personal heroism, however, that deputy could compass no purpose by his unwelcome oratory, and amid rancorous hootings, he descended to his seat. The deputation was introduced, and its speaker, not judging it necessary to waste words, was brief and emphatic. 'For four days,' he said, 'the people of Paris have been under arms, and have sought from their mandatories redress for their outraged rights; those mandatories have derided their calmness and perseverance. Representatives! the crimes of the factions in the Convention are known to you; we come *for the last time* to denounce them; decree at once that they are culpable, and unworthy the confidence of the nation. The people are weary of seeing you postpone their welfare; they are still in your governance; save them, or they will save themselves.' The president in his reply delicately reproved the spirit of this harangue, and hinted that petitioners ought to evince respect towards the national representation, but invited them, nevertheless, to partake the honours of the sitting. They resented his remarks, and surlily declined to embrace those prostituted honours. The Convention was in a mournful dilemma at this critical conjuncture. To sacrifice the members who reflected on it its chiefest lustre at the dictation of an armed mob, was abhorrent to the Plain, which comprised many men who, albeit lacking hardihood of character, were endowed with eminent virtues and talents; and yet it was manifest that a refusal would expose it to the last excesses of unbridled fury. Barrère made a vain attempt to effect a compromise. In the name of the Committee of Public Safety, he besought the inculpated deputies voluntarily to abjure their functions for a limited period. Isnard, Lanthenas, and Dusaulx responded to the appeal, and declared their readiness to retire from the Convention. Lanjuinais spurned the proposal. 'As I have shown some courage hitherto,' he exclaimed, 'expect from me neither suspension nor resignation.' Barbaroux adhered to the like resolution. 'I have sworn,' he said, 'to die at my post, and I will keep my oath.' The suggestion was not even agreeable to the Mountain, and it particularly incensed Marat. 'What!' he cried, 'are we to allow culprits the honour of self-devotion? To offer sacrifices to his country, a man must be pure; it is to me alone, a real martyr of liberty, that devotion is appropriate. I offer, therefore, my suspension from the moment you decree the arrest of the accused deputies.' Billaud-Varennes and Chabot made the like magnanimous tender. At this instant Lacroix burst into the hall, fuming with visible excitement. He declared

he had been insulted, that a sentinel had stopped him at the door, and refused to allow him egress. Another deputy exclaimed that he had been treated in the same manner. Inquiries were made, and it was discovered that all the posts had been changed, that fresh guards were stationed at all the issues from the palace, with orders to prevent every deputy from leaving. The Convention, therefore, was imprisoned. This astounding fact aroused the ire of several even among the Mountain. Barrère threw aside his usual caution, and loudly inveighed against the new tyrants who had set themselves up—the Revolutionary Committee and the Commune. ‘They control us,’ he said; ‘their sentries surround us; and the national representation is enslaved.’ He traced this shocking calamity to the Duke of York, who was before Valenciennes, and had sent emissaries to corrupt the French,* which emissaries were actually engaged in distributing five-franc assignats at the very doors of the Convention. He moved that the Assembly should suspend its sitting, and issue from the hall in a body, overawing by its majesty the brute force arrayed to coerce it. Danton found the idea good, and supported it. ‘I will find out,’ he said, ‘whence emanated the order to remove the guard of the Convention, and replace it by another. This outrage on the national majesty must be vigorously avenged.’ It was resolved, accordingly, that the Convention should sally from the palace. Herault de Séchelles, who was president, led the way, with his hat on, as a signal of distress; the rest of the members followed bareheaded. Many of the Mountain remained in the hall, detained by the shouts and exhortations of the galleries.

The first avenue to which the ambulant Convention directed its steps was that opening on the Place du Carrouzel. The internal sentinels retreated at its presence, but here it encountered the redoubtable Henriot in person, mounted on a prancing steed, and wielding the sword of command. ‘What do the people require?’ the president said to him; ‘the Convention is solely occupied in promoting their welfare.’ ‘Herault,’ Henriot replied, ‘the people have not risen to be amused with phrases, but to give their sovereign commands. Their will is, that the thirty-four culprits should be delivered up to them.’ ‘You must first have us all delivered up,’ exclaimed those around the president. ‘Cannoneers, to your guns!’ shouted Henriot. Eight pieces were pointed on the gateway, and the men had lighted matches in their hands. Herault stepped instinctively aside, and the deputies hastily recoiled. Crossing the vestibule of the palace, they presented themselves at the outlets to the garden. Successively they tried them, and at all were repulsed. Marat skipped from post to post, encouraging the soldiers to be steadfast. ‘No weak-

* Toulangeon, in reporting this speech of Barrère, gravely inserts in brackets at this part the words, ‘this fact was undoubted.’—*Hist. de France*, vol. iii. p. 432.

ness,' he said to them; 'hold firm until they are delivered up to you.' No resource was left but to return in dejection and mortification to the hall of sitting. Further resistance was not attempted, and the decrees of impeachment were forthwith passed. Marat was the true lord of the ascendant. He dispensed condonation or proscription at his pleasure. This man he absolved, that condemned. Dusaulx was merely an old driveller, he said; Lanthénas was stupid enough to be of no account; Ducos had erroneous notions, but he could never be a leader. He proposed, therefore, that these should be omitted from the list of proscripts, and that Valazé and Fermont should be added to it instead. Silence expressed acquiescence, and the secretaries took down the names as he enunciated them. The decree bore, that the accused deputies should be placed under arrest at their own houses; and the amended list contained the names of twenty-nine such deputies, the flower of the Gironde; two of the committee of twelve, Boyer-Fonfrede and St Martin, being pardoned, as not having signed the warrant for Hebert's arrest. The ministers Claviere and Lebrun were involved in the fate of their stricken allies.

Such was the first mutilation of the National Convention, whereby it was shorn of its most illustrious members. It was not effected without great difficulty, and required two armed insurrections, in which the great bulk of the people acted as mere passive instruments. Not more than 4000 or 5000 men of all the 80,000 encompassing the palace of the Tuileries could be relied on for proceeding to extremities against the Convention, and these were carefully posted in the front ranks. The measures on the part of the Anarchists were no doubt skilfully taken and resolutely prosecuted, for they had to contend against many powerful obstacles. The imposing prestige of the Convention itself, as the depository of the national sovereignty, was an element of great gravity in frustration of their schemes; the sluggishness of the multitude was to be continually stimulated by energetic exertions in lying and slandering;* the sans-culottes could be kept to their colours only by a pay of forty sous a day, which the Convention suicidally undertook to furnish; above all, the want of an influential leader was a serious drawback to them. Robespierre at the utmost would give a tacit consent and approval; he harangued at the Jacobins upon the necessity of purging the Convention of traitors, but carefully abstained from committing himself to the plan of effecting it by main force. He hoped to accomplish his purpose by intimidation alone, and not

* Even the faubourg St Antoine could not be stimulated to action on the 31st May, until it was assured that the section Butte-des-Moulins had hoisted the white cockade, and intrenched itself in the Palais Royal. The plunder of the rich shops and magazines in that celebrated enclosure was held out as an additional incitement.

too palpably by the agency of men whose rise he had cause to dread; thus he was active on the 31st May, and laboured hard to extort the required decree from the Convention when there was a shadow of pretence that it might act with freedom; whereas on the 2d June, he took no part in the proceedings. Danton shared the wish of Robespierre to get rid of the Girondins; not like the latter, to gratify personal hatred and ambition, but really because he viewed them as impediments to the salvation of the Revolution, to which he was heart and soul devoted. He was even content to sacrifice himself, if he could thereby insure the unity he so desiderated; and he had entertained with ingenuous fervour a suggestion of Garat, the successor of Roland in the ministry of the interior, to take a leaf from the history of Athens, and execute a mutual ostracism. Aristides had proposed to the Athenians that they should banish both him and his rival Themistocles; if the chiefs of the Mountain and the Gironde would voluntarily retire from the scene, it was supposed all strife would cease, and parties harmoniously blend to resist the foreign foe. The idea was generous, and seduced the imagination of Danton; but it was sufficiently chimerical, and Robespierre turned up his nose at it with scorn. Actuated by such sentiments, Danton might regard the movement of the 31st May with some favour; but on the 2d June his indignation was loudly expressed. Marat, it is true, gave himself frankly to the Anarchists, for they might well rank as his especial disciples; but by all above the refuse of the population he was looked upon with loathing as a veritable monster. The shopkeepers naturally abhorred him; and if the sections had been fairly represented in their assemblies, they would have rather sided with the Convention than with the faction of Anarchists headed by Marat. But bands of brigands overrode those assemblies, and often the result of their deliberations was reversed after it had been pronounced, nay, even entries in their registers forged, so representing them as adverse to the Convention, when in reality they had declared their adherence to it. Hence many of the deputations that professed to speak in the name of the sections were absolutely fictitious, but had not the less the effect of giving to them the appearance of unanimity. If the Girondins had united firmly, and, without using the disgraceful arts of their adversaries, descended into these lower arenas of controversy, they might have reared a barrier of defence too strong to be forced, and averted the ruin that overtook them. Nevertheless, it was better for the interests of the Revolution that they did not do so; mournful as was their fall, it proved beneficial in the main; for if it entailed on France unspeakable horrors, they were temporary, and it saved her from a subjugation which would have crushed her for ever.

It was precisely in the essential of union that the Girondins

most signally failed. Attracted together by community of views and congenial sentiments, they never acted with the concert of a compact party. Against the concentrated organisation of the Jacobins they opposed nothing but desultory individual efforts, which sometimes had a momentary success, but were always in the end defeated. They had, in truth, no leaders to sustain a party. Vergniaud, the most eloquent amongst them, was deficient in firmness of character, and relapsed into almost torpid inertness when not stirred by excitement. Guadet was high-toned and animated, arguing with the closest logic, but irritable and intemperate; and he, more than any of the rest, provoked the animosity of the Jacobins. Gensonné was intellectual and impassioned, and had the obstinacy which is readily mistaken for firmness; but he was an indifferent orator, and devoid of the qualities fitting him for active strife. Brissot, the object of Marat's incessant denunciation, possessed great abilities and much practical knowledge; but he was of simple mind, and of a facility that wholly disqualified him for ruling others. Roland was honest, zealous, indefatigable; but stern, repulsive, and impracticable from the very excess of his austerity. His wife was more adapted than any of the Girondins to be the vital spirit of a party. Dauntless, confident, unbending, impulsive, clever in the highest sense of the term, she mourned the weaknesses of her friends, and was sometimes tempted to break through the restraining modesty of her sex.* Others there were in the list of lesser note, all excellent rhetoricians, good philosophers, proud in the consciousness of intellectual superiority, but unsuited either to exercise mastery over men or to maintain a successful stand in civil broils. Hence the Girondins formed a loose collection of men, who refused to be bound by what they stigmatised as the ties and trammels of party, holding that such combinations were degrad-

* On the 31st May, the Commune sent a body of men to arrest her husband; she hastened to the Convention, and making her way through the armed multitude who surrounded it, she gained the inner vestibule, overcoming all the obstacles of opposing sentries. The storm within was at its height when she arrived: it was with difficulty she could send a message to Vergniaud, who at length came to her. In a few words he related the violence that reigned in the Convention, and the perilous state of their cause; she fired with indignation, and insisted upon his conducting her to the bar. He represented the futility of such a step, but she urged him vehemently. 'If I am admitted,' she said, 'I will venture to say what you could not express unless you were yourself attacked; I fear nothing in the world, and if I fail to save Roland, I will give utterance to truths which will be useful to the republic. Go and prepare your colleagues: an outburst of courage may produce a great effect, and will be at least a great example.' Vergniaud assured her that the bar was so crowded with petitioners that she could not hope to be heard for some hours. She consented to retire; but, full of her heroic purpose, she returned to the Tuileries in the evening, when she had the mortification to find the sitting broken up. That same night she was herself torn from bed, and conveyed to prison by order of the Commune: her husband succeeded in making his escape. She gives an extraordinary account of her adventures on this eventful day in her *Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 64 et seq.

ing to the independence of their minds, and contrary to the purity of republican government. In this they deceived themselves, as in many other illusions; for though the virulence and dissensions of parties are to be deplored, yet in popular assemblies nothing can be achieved without organisation, and in political as in military warfare it is the primary condition of success.

With all their frailties, with all their aberrations, with all their deficiencies, which sprung from noble sources, the fate of the Girondins excites general sympathy and commiseration among mankind. Young for the most part, virtuous, highly-gifted, the graces of nature vying with the adornments of culture, they composed an interesting band of martyrs immolated in a glorious cause—that of order against anarchy, of freedom against tyranny. With them not only liberty was extinguished in France, but everything that is held respectable among men. Kings have exercised despotisms iron and grinding; aristocracies have emulated them in cruelties and oppressions; sans-culottes leave them both in the distance. The realities of their sway surpass imagination; the mind grows sceptical at the narrative, and doubts that the whole is a dream of hideous fancy. The madness of violence in its wildest paroxysm is shown; cities blown into the air; rivers turned red with blood; provinces devastated with fire and sword; murder the engrossing occupation of the government, and of all in authority under it: such the characteristics of what, in the poverty of language, has been inadequately styled *the Reign of Terror*.



CHAPTER VIII.

THE REIGN OF TERROR—GENERAL INVASION OF FRANCE BY THE ALLIES
—FEROCITIES OF THE JACOBINS IN LA VENDEE, AT LYONS, AND ELSE-
WHERE—JUNE TO DECEMBER 1793.

The Anarchists achieved the victory of the 2d of June; the Jacobins appropriated its results. The former had only one decided representative in the Convention—Marat—and even he held aloof from a perfect identification with them; the latter had all its principal leaders, Robespierre, St Just, Couthon, Collot d'Herbois, Billaud-Varennes, who, now at the summit of power, were intent, like its various possessors, to fix the Revolution definitively in their own persons and principles. These men were associated by a community of sentiments and dispositions, by a concord of fanaticism, which armed them with a resolution and ferocity rigid and remorseless, whilst it rendered them superior

to all the allurements of life, and left them sensible only to the impulses of ambition and vengeance. Danton, who had been the first to proclaim 'terror' as the rule of government, was of a soft and relenting complexion in comparison with such men; moreover, grosser passions mastered him, and weaned him from that absorbing lust of dominion and persecution which animated them, insomuch that he became discredited for inertness and moderation, delinquencies sufficient to blast even his high revolutionary character. Still he was a great athlete not to be lightly slighted; if irritated and aroused, he might be urged to an effort of desperate energy, which, although desultory, must prove dangerous to the objects of his attack. Hence to him and his friends—Camille-Desmoulins, Herault de Séchelles, Lacroix, Legendre—a seeming participation was at first left in the conduct of affairs. Danton retained his seat in the Committee of Public Safety, and Séchelles was appointed reporter of the committee for the digest of a constitution. The Anarchists were chiefly dreaded by Robespierre at the moment, and he took an early opportunity of checking their presumption. After the executive power was secured by the nomination of Jacobin ministers, and the remodelling of all the committees of the Convention, except that of Public Safety, the new constitution was eliminated with extraordinary rapidity, in order both to manifest that the Girondins had hitherto obstructed the completion of that important work, and to provide a rallying point round which the whole nation might cleave. It is true that the Girondins had laboured earnestly to expedite this very work, seeing in its consummation an end to the domination of Paris; and the philosophic Condorcet had framed a constitution in accordance with their views, which the Mountain, for the opposite reason, combated, and defeated by studied procrastination. Condorcet's scheme was now wholly discarded, and a genuine Jacobin formula propounded in its stead. The loosest possible texture was given to the government; an assembly was to be elected annually, directly by the citizens, who were to meet for the purpose on the 1st of May in each year; the right of suffrage was universal in all males above twenty-one, and eligibility was unqualified; a council of twenty-four persons, chosen by the Assembly from a list presented by the electors, was to exercise the functions of executive government. Supremely democratical as was this chimera of a constitution, it failed to satisfy the Anarchists. Adopted by the Convention without discussion, it was sent to the primary assemblies for ratification. Those bodies throughout the country generally approved it, and it received all the force of a national sanction; but the Anarchists of Paris found it defective, and moved the Cordelier Club to petition against it. The omission that offended them was the want of a provision against forestallers, the sworn

enemies of the people; an article clearly inappropriate in an organic charter. Robespierre caused the petition to be rejected, and afterwards denounced its authors at the Jacobin Club as aristocrats in disguise, as men who were sold to Austria, for, quoth he, 'none but such could venture, under the pretended mantle of patriotism, to decry the most perfect and popular constitution that was ever bestowed upon man.'

He deputed Collot d'Herbois to reclaim the Cordeliers from their errors. These the Jacobin envoy found penitent, and at his instigation they expelled from their society the ringleaders of the movement—Jaques Roux, that miscreant monk who had insulted Louis XVI. in his last moments, by refusing to take charge of his will, and a hotheaded Lyonnese, Leclerc by name. Thus did Robespierre, with admirable art, maintain the balance of his position; on the one hand he countenanced the Dantonists, and on the other he curbed and yet attached the Anarchists. He was from this moment the leading star of the Revolution; and if he were deficient in almost all the qualities that command the applause of mankind, he was gifted with a consummate aptitude for the crisis of a popular rule, no man having ever rivalled him in his sway over the passions and affections of uneducated masses.

Robespierre and the Jacobins then reigned, but their dominion was almost circumscribed to the walls of Paris. Foreign and domestic enemies alike threatened to pull them from their quaking throne. Coburg had slain Dampierre, the successor of Dumouriez in the command of the French army in Flanders, stormed the camp of Famars, to which the latter had retreated, and reduced the strongholds of Condé and Valenciennes: the former by a blockade, the latter by a terrific bombardment, in which vast numbers of the peaceful inhabitants were killed. As agreed upon with England, he took possession of these towns, not in the name of Louis XVII., according to his original pledge, but in the name of his master, the emperor of Germany, who was to have French Flanders in the future work of dismemberment. After these exploits he approached Custine, recalled from the Rhine to succeed the unfortunate Dampierre, who had taken post in the camp of Cæsar in front of Bouchain. This was the last defensible position covering Paris; and with the great preponderance of forces possessed by the allies, now swelled by the Duke of York at the head of the British and Dutch contingent, Custine could not hope to maintain it. But reinforcements poured in upon him from the interior; raw recruits, it is true, yet in the eyes of the Jacobins an overmatch for the soldiers of despotism. Custine thought otherwise, and proposed to drill and discipline them before confronting the enemy in battle. For this heresy he was apprehended, conveyed to Paris, sent before the Revolutionary Tribunal,

and guillotined. Kilmaine replaced him, and a few days subsequently, after a month's inactivity, Coburg assaulted the French in their encampment, who, justifying the misgivings of Custine, fled upon the first appearance of the Austrian standards. Kilmaine displayed great ability in rallying his broken army behind the line of the Scarpe, supported upon Arras and Douay, but he was thus driven from the road to Paris, and obliged to abandon the remaining fortresses to their own resources. Happily, the Austrians were intent to capture these, in order to make sure of their individual conquest; and though they pushed flying parties to Peronne, and even to St Quentin, causing the deepest consternation in Paris, they divided their forces, and sat down before Quesnoi and Cambray. The British also had their particular conquest to make. Dunkirk had long been an object of apprehension, and was now one of desire to their government. The Duke of York accordingly marched off to the coast with 35,000 men to seize that maritime fastness, which was very slenderly garrisoned, and scarcely at all provisioned. But he took his time, like his cousin of Coburg, and gave the French ample opportunity to throw in supplies of men and stores. This fatuous dispersion of the Austrians and British in pursuit of their individual designs relieved France from the pressure of imminent danger on her northern frontier; but her situation was truly perilous with a conquering host in the heart of her territory, only 150 miles from her uncovered and defenceless capital.

Meanwhile the king of Prussia was regarding the conduct of his allies in Flanders with very unpleasant feelings. He saw their undisguised selfishness, and repined that he should be a tool to aid its gratification. Nevertheless, it was essential for the security of Germany that he should wrest the great fortress of Mayence from the French, and he passed the Rhine to accomplish that important purpose. The extensive fortifications were manned by 20,000 republicans; the beleaguering force amounted to 50,000 men. Moreover, Wurmser formed a flanking army with 30,000 Austrians, whilst the French, driven from the field, took refuge to the number of 40,000 in the Vosges mountains, behind the lines of Weissenburg. Frederick William carried on his operations leisurely, and consumed two months, from March to May, before he completed the investment of the place. The siege is a celebrated one in the annals of war; the garrison holding out until reduced to the very last extremity. The French army in the Vosges, first under Custine, secondly under Beauharnais, twice sallied out of its intrenchments, and charged with valour the protecting Austrians and Prussians, but was repulsed in each instance with heavy loss. The garrison had no alternative but to capitulate, which it did on the 22d July. The king of Prussia was lenient in his terms. Too happy to get

hold of the place at any price, he merely stipulated that the French soldiers, thinned to 17,000, should not serve for a year against the allies. They marched out with their arms and baggage, and being at once draughted into the interior of France, they became valuable auxiliaries for the suppression of civil war. Content with the reduction of Mayence, the Prussian monarch, his thoughts much engrossed by Poland, reposed quietly in his quarters, and listened with indifference to the importunities of the Austrian commanders, who were eager to advance and force the lines of Weissenburg. Since the allies greatly outnumbered the French, this would have been an easy task, as was afterwards demonstrated; and therefore, on her eastern frontier likewise, France at this moment was in an equally perilous predicament, dependent on the fluctuating fiat of a monarch whose mind was alternately swayed by the ambition of military glory, the doubts of jealousy, and the yearnings of rapacity.

On her southern frontier, too, France was in a dismal strait. The Sardinians and Austrians, collected in two armies, amounting to 50,000 men, prepared both to pour into the valleys of Savoy, and to dislodge the French from the county of Nice. The same amazing imbecility, however, marked the allied commanders on this side. Instead of combining their forces, they studiously disseminated them over the widest possible extent, and groped along every narrow valley, and peeped round every little hillock, as if the terrible republicans were in ambush to overwhelm them at every step. Thus they fought with shadows for two months in the ravines of the Little St Bernard and Mount Cenis, the French having the merest handful of troops to oppose to them, with the whole of the country in their rear a prey to civil war. They required simply to march in something like compact order to reach Lyons, the centre of the vast insurrection, but they halted, and let slip the golden opportunity. Still, their mere presence in Savoy with such a preponderant force threatened France in her most vulnerable quarter. Near the coast, on the Maritime Alps, some fighting took place. The French had there 15,000 men, whom they called 'the Army of Italy,' in a starved and ragged condition. Yet were they emboldened, under Brunet, to try the offensive. They attempted to wrest the mountain post of Saorgio from the Sardinians, but were defeated, and driven back to Nice in utter confusion. The enemy did not dream of improving his success, but from the heights of the hills gazed calmly on the country which had been so recently torn from him, neither its inviting aspect, nor its nudity of defenders, alluring him to its reconquest. Even when a British fleet of thirty-five sail, under Lord Hood, appeared off the coast to assist his operations, he still shrank from the enterprise; and yet, although it was made manifest that so far as the Piedmontese were concerned, the ghost of

an army was sufficient to keep them in check, on no point was the republic more seriously menaced than on this, if her adversary had possessed the very slenderest share of courage or ability. Joined by a Spanish fleet of almost equal force with his own, Lord Hood held the complete command of the Mediterranean, and kept the whole southern coast of France in close blockade and constant alarm. Not content, however, with such hostility, he harboured a design upon Toulon, fraught with the direst consequences to the naval power, and peradventure to the existence of France.

Of the multitude of her assailing enemies, the Spaniards made the most vigorous inroad into the territory of France. Since she had passed under the rule of the Bourbons, Spain had continually declined in greatness, until from the first of European powers in the beginning of the seventeenth century, she had dwindled into a minor state at the end of the eighteenth. She still possessed, nevertheless, a respectable army, and, in numerical strength, a formidable navy; but her government was depraved to the last degree, and her sinews were wasted in frivolity and malversations. Like France before the Revolution, she was divided into provinces with distinct rights and privileges, forming so many isolated states, alien and repulsive to each other. Hence, under a lax and feeble administration, her unity was precarious, and she was incapable of any great and sustained aggressive effort. Her finances, too, with all the mines of the new world at her command, were dilapidated; and she presented in all her features the sad spectacle and pregnant moral of a country, overflowing with the bounties of nature, fallen into decay through the blasting operation of misrule. But her population was fiery and chivalric, eager for strife, alert in response to a call to arms, and well-disposed for a foray into a neighbour's land. Accordingly, the court of Madrid found little difficulty in mustering its quota of fighting men; and by the month of April, it had two armies in the field, 30,000 and 25,000 strong respectively, destined to invade France by the gorges of the Eastern and Western Pyrenees. The chain of mountains stretches across France, which is here as an isthmus, from Bayonne on the Atlantic to Perpignan on the Mediterranean. Servan, late minister of war, commanded the French troops before Bayonne, Deflers those before Perpignan. General Caro, at the head of 20,000 Spaniards, burst impetuously on Servan, and in two engagements worsted him, killed numbers of his soldiers, and took from him a large quantity of cannon and ammunition, compelling him with precipitation to shut himself up in the stronghold of St Jean Pied de Port. At the same moment Don Ricardos assaulted Deflers at the opposite extremity, and by a bold and masterly movement put his whole army to flight, which rallied with difficulty under the walls of Perpignan. If Ricardos had not

stopped to capture the fortresses of Bellegarde and Les Bains, he must have carried Perpignan, so bewildering was the panic that had seized upon the French. Afterwards he pushed beyond Perpignan, and indicated an intention of overrunning Roussillon, an ancient dependency of the crown of Castile. By such a hardy irruption he might envelop and master Toulouse, the famed city of the Troubadours; or, diverging to the left, form a junction with Caro, advance to Bordeaux, and penetrate into the insurgent provinces of La Vendée. Such was the critical position of affairs on the south-western frontier of France.

At the time the Jacobins assumed the reins of government, therefore, victorious masses of foreign enemies were on the soil of France, and menaced them from the four points of the compass. A hundred and twenty thousand Austrians, British, Germans, and Dutch in the north; 80,000 Prussians and Austrians in the east; 50,000 Italians and Austrians in the south; 50,000 Spaniards in the west: an aggregate of 300,000 men of all nations. Yet overwhelming as this array of invaders seemed, it was insignificant in comparison with the dangers that beset them from internal foes. All France, from Normandy to Marseilles and Toulon, was in open revolt against them. Previous to the outrage of the 2d of June, movements had taken place in the provinces to succour the Girondins by an armed demonstration, and even a march on Paris. In the principal cities, the communes or municipalities, which were entirely in the hands of the Jacobins, had been subverted by the sections, which, on the contrary, were filled with moderate republicans and royalist partisans. At Lyons a pitched battle had been fought between the factions in the presence of the commissioners of the Convention on the 29th May, which resulted in the triumph of the sectionaries, who stormed the town hall, dispersed the municipality, gutted the hall of the Jacobin Club, and threw into prison Chalier, the Marat of Lyons, and his chief associates. Similar occurrences, attended with somewhat less of bloody contention, had taken place in Marseilles, Toulon, Grenoble, Toulouse, Bordeaux, and Nantes. The events of the 31st May and 2d June increased the exasperation of these cities, and extended the sphere of rebellion. They served to stimulate equally the royalists, the constitutionalists, and the Girondins; and whilst the insurrection spread over seventy-two departments, it partook of all these elements in its character. In the Vosges, the Jura, the Lozere, the mountaineers flew to arms in the cause of the priests and royalty, as in Vendée; the Normans and Bretons were animated with the spirit of the constitutional monarchy; the Gironde itself, and the south generally, were steadfast to republicanism. Thus the principle of disunion was at work in the departments as among the allies, and an effective combination was almost impracticable. Nevertheless, the

attention and forces of the Convention were distracted; and the conscripts of the great levy of 300,000 men decreed in March, instead of being sent forward to the armies on the frontiers, were detained to fight their countrymen. The Jacobins, however, were not in the least daunted by this extraordinary accumulation of difficulties. The Convention they had reduced to silence; not a member ventured to open his lips; in trembling acquiescence it heard and converted into decrees the propositions of the Committee of Public Safety. The faculty of speech was transferred to the Jacobin Club, where Robespierre constantly attended to explain and vindicate the measures of government. Decrees were thus passed against the insurgent departments, giving them but three days to retrace their steps under the penalty of outlawry, and threatening merciless vengeance against all who should persevere in resistance. Commissioners likewise were despatched into the disloyal quarters, to reclaim obedience, and enforce the mandates of the Convention. In many places these commissioners were insulted, discarded, and even imprisoned; but in others they soothed irritation, and succeeded in quietly reinstating the Jacobin supremacy. The new constitution, as had been foreseen, operated advantageously in this respect. It afforded a plea to the timid and irresolute to withdraw from hostilities, inasmuch as it was held to manifest the disinterested views of the Jacobins, whose first use of power was to throw it into the hands of the entire community. So excellent, indeed, did this piece of legislation seem, or so strong was the temptation to embrace any means by which the Jacobin rule might be shortened, that even in the revolted districts themselves it was approved by the primary assemblies, and a cordial or simulated adhesion universally given to it. It was attended, therefore, with all the success the Jacobins had expected; it furnished them with a ready answer to imputations of tyranny or usurpation, and it paralysed the confederation of the departments. These acted under all the disadvantages of isolation; each waited for the other to adopt decisive measures, and hung back until the signal of general battle was hoisted. The Jacobins, on the other hand, struck from a centre with the weight of a power used to subjugate, and with the benefit of auxiliaries in the midst of their enemies, through their innumerable affiliated societies. Hence they operated with that commanding energy they had ever shown; reckless as to appliances or practices, they smote with the capacity, the activity, and the fury of demons.

The proscribed Girondins had been constituted prisoners in their own houses. Most of them remained in this gentle durance; some escaped, to stir up and sustain the insurrection of the departments. Among these latter were Pétion, Guadet, Buzot, Barbaroux, Louvet, and others. Roland also fled from Paris, but took

no part in fomenting a civil war. The fugitive deputies repaired to Caen, where delegates from Normandy and Brittany had assembled to organise the revolt of those two provinces. This assembly received them with enthusiasm; a correspondence was opened with the other insurgent departments, and measures were taken to levy an army. Fortune was so far favourable, that General Wimpfen, who had been appointed to the command of the coast round Cherbourg, offered his services, and was accepted as generalissimo of the departmental forces. He affected the greatest zeal in the cause of the Girondins, though in reality he meditated the restoration of royalty, as he allowed ere long to transpire. Evreux was selected as the place of rendezvous for the contingents of Bretons and Normans, and thither Wimpfen despatched his lieutenant, Puisaye, a disguised royalist like himself, with nearly 6000 men, in the beginning of July. The Girondins were urgent with him to lose no time, but to push rapidly on Paris, without waiting for the Breton levies, of which only a battalion of 400 men had joined. He wished to delay until he had collected a numerous army; but they, suspecting his designs, insisted, and Puisaye was ordered to advance to Vernon. He put his troops in motion for this purpose on the 13th July, and as he proceeded on the way, fell in with the gendarmes and sans-culottes detached from Paris to meet him. The next day the two parties approached to fight, but on the first discharge of artillery, the Norman volunteers disbanded and fled. The Breton battalion stood firm, and made an orderly retreat to Evreux. This disaster was decisive of the contest. Wimpfen proposed to fortify Caen, and defend it to the last extremity, but he frankly avowed that he was in communication with England, and viewed a republic in the light of a grotesque fallacy. The Girondins refused, consequently, to have anything more to do with him; and leaving the departments of Normandy to make the best terms they could with the conquerors, assumed the disguise of common soldiers, and marched off with the Breton battalion for Brest, hoping to take shipping there to reach Bordeaux. In this long journey they underwent manifold dangers and hardships, the country being already hostile through dread of the indomitable Jacobins. They were obliged at last to separate from the Bretons, and wandered many days and nights in the fields and woods, living on such chance food as they could pick up. They ultimately reached Quimper, where, by the assistance of some friends, they were enabled to embark and proceed to Bordeaux. But that city had itself succumbed, and they found it no longer a place of refuge. For several months, however, they contrived to secrete themselves in the neighbourhood of Bordeaux, notwithstanding the unremitting searches of the Jacobin committees. Two of them, Guadet and Salles, were discovered pent up in the wall of a house at St Emilion occupied by Guadet's father,

and being identified as outlaws, were forthwith consigned to the guillotine. Two others, Biroteau and Duchatel, were seized in the city of Bordeaux, and sent to Paris for execution. Barbaroux, Pétion, and Buzot, alarmed by the seizure of their comrades, forsook their place of concealment, and roamed into the fields, ignorant whither to direct their steps. Barbaroux blew out his brains, and died in a ditch; two days afterwards, the bodies of Pétion and Buzot were found in a stubble half devoured by dogs. Louvet and Meillan alone eluded the grasp of their pursuers, and lived to entertain the world with accounts of their adventures, which give a picture of that extraordinary era far more graphic than the pen of the ambitious historian can be made to realise.

The Girondin confederacy of Caen was dissolved, and its melancholy end wrought wofully on the fortitude of the other disseminated federalists, who regarded the discomfiture of Vernon as the sure augury of disaster. But it led to a romantic incident, which brought out the female character in strong heroic relief. A young damsel of Calvados, Charlotte Corday, of studious and thoughtful temperament, had imbibed the ardent passion for liberty awakened by the Revolution, and in her pure mind revolved the idea of a perfect republic, such as she conceived the Girondins sought to found. She mourned their fall as a calamity to her country, and when the proscribed deputies arrived at Caen, she left her father's house, and hastened thither to behold them. The sight of men she regarded with veneration thus outcast and persecuted, touched her deeply, and she vowed in her heart to avenge them. Marat seemed to her the archfiend who had prostrated her idols, and him she resolved to sacrifice. She repaired to Paris intent upon her mission; and feigning to have important intelligence to communicate from Caen, she obtained admission to the chamber of Marat, who was labouring under illness. He listened with eagerness to her recital, and asked the names of the deputies at Caen. She mentioned them, and he wrote them down in pencil. 'Good!' he exclaimed; 'they shall soon meet their fate.' 'Yours is at hand!' she cried, and stabbed him to the heart. He uttered a shriek, and died. It was on the day of the fatal defeat of Vernon, the 14th July. The murderess stood calm and collected; she was instantly seized, and conveyed to prison. Arraigned before the Revolutionary Tribunal, she betrayed no sorrow, but on the contrary exulted in her deed. 'There is no need of any formality,' she said; 'I killed Marat.' Her youth, her beauty, her undaunted spirit, moved the spectators, but could not save her from the doom of death. She preserved her tranquillity and even gaiety to the foot of the scaffold, and gave herself to the executioner with a firm and composed mien. Her victim was raised to be a demigod. His remains were exposed for several days to the public

gaze; orators pronounced panegyrics to his memory; the sections passed reverentially before his bier; and young maidens strewed it with flowers. He was decerned a public funeral; the Convention, and all the authorities of Paris, attended him to the grave; he was deposited in the Pantheon, in place of Mirabeau, whose body was cast out; and his bust was solemnly inaugurated by the side of Lepelletier's in the national halls. No honours were spared to commemorate the constant advocate of the poor, the watchful guardian of liberty, the infallible descrier of traitors, the veritable 'friend of the people.'

The elevation of Marat, and his magnificent obsequies, excited the jealousy of Robespierre, who essayed to cool the Jacobins by reminding them that the dagger of the assassin had been directed against him; but he must have inwardly rejoiced at his death. Union between them could not have been long maintained, and with his hold on the affections of the rabble, Marat would have proved a formidable rival. As it was, he affected to deplore his loss as the most terrible of calamities, and preached immeasurable vengeance. Nor did he exhort in vain, for Marat himself, if he had been on earth, might have smiled with satisfaction at the hecatombs sacrificed to his manes. His famous specific of slaughter for all the ills of the country was sanctified by his martyrdom, and accepted as a hallowed doctrine. Thus his influence became greater in death than it had been in life. The Anarchists reared their head as his last favourite disciples; with the shade of Marat they overawed Robespierre, and compelled him to forego that medium policy which he had striven to uphold. Danton, and all the moderate members of the Committee of Public Safety, were discarded, except Barrère, who was retained for his expertness in dressing up reports for the Convention. They were replaced by St Just, Couthon, Thuriot, Lindet, Prieur (de la Marne), Gasparin, and Jean-Bon-St-André, Robespierre not choosing as yet to enrol himself among the decemvirs. The detained Girondins were removed to prison, and the act of accusation against them was ordered to be prepared. The communes throughout France were empowered to fix a price on corn, and to punish farmers by confiscation of their goods who held back supplies, and refused to sell at the *maximum*. In Paris, where the dearth was greatest, and the population most impatient, minute regulations for the distribution of bread were promulgated. Every baker was required to bake a certain quantity of bread daily, and he was prohibited from selling more to individuals than was specified on tickets issued by the sectional committees. The number of loaves allowed was proportioned to that of mouths in each family, and these tickets of allotment could be obtained only by those capable of producing testimonials of *civism*, whereby aristocrats must either starve or surrender themselves

to justice. Moreover, purchasers were to be served in strict rotation, and for this purpose cords were affixed to the shops for them to hold by until their several turns came. Constant tumults occurred from struggles for precedence, in which the weak and timid were overborne by the strong and boisterous; but the exemplification of equality was consoling to the multitude, and, satisfied that the rich fared no better than themselves, the sans-culottes were content with their short rations. Thus the movement of things was in the direction of pure force applied to all the concerns of existence—a principle amply developed within a few weeks, when revolutionary energy was aroused to its mightiest paroxysm.

The federalist insurrection had lost its character of danger, and was confined to Lyons, Marseilles, and other cities of the south, which resisted less the authority of the Convention than the execution of its decrees for the re-establishment of the Jacobin authorities and the liberation of imprisoned patriots. But there was another insurrection, which defied all efforts at suppression, and which grew in magnitude with ominous rapidity. This was the insurrection in La Vendée. Properly so called, La Vendée was only a portion of the seat of war, but from the invincible tenacity of its people, it has given its name to the famous episode. Under this appellation are included part of Lower Normandy, Maine, Anjou, and Poitou, now forming the four departments of Loire Inferieure, Maine et Loire, Deux Sevres, and Vendée. This country stretched from the line of the Sarthe across the Loire at Saumur, through Fontenay and Niort to Les Sables d'Olonne on the coast, bounded in its whole extent by the Atlantic. The war first broke out in the Bocage or Vendée Proper, a woody region as the name implies, and soon extended to the Marais, a low flat district intersected by canals, and evidently at one time washed by the sea. The inhabitants were in a primitive state of society, possessing all the virtues of the boorish condition, with its concomitants of gross ignorance and superstition. To tend their flocks and herds was their chief employment, tilling very little ground; to shoot wolves and boars their sport; to dance in the courts of their lords on holidays their amusement. The closest ties of affection bound them to their lords, who were in every way worthy of the unalterable attachment manifested towards them. Holders of but moderate domains, they lived amongst their tenants, shared their pastimes, sympathised with their woes and fortunes. A happy contentment reigned amidst this simplicity of manners and seclusion from the turmoils of the active world. The Revolution came into such a quarter an unwelcome guest. Its innovations were all unpalatable to a population incapable of comprehending its spirit or design, and from the first it was received with open discontent. In the few towns of the district—

Nantes, Angers, Saumur, Chatillon, Fontenay—it was embraced with the ardour characteristic of more advanced communities; but in the rural parts the people clung to their landlords and pastors with only the greater zeal for the efforts to slacken their bonds. The religious schism alighted on a congenial soil to procreate discord and calamity; the spirit of fanaticism was aroused by the nonjuring priests, and several bloody encounters took place between the National Guards of the towns and the peasants of the Bocage. In September 1791, Dumouriez was stationed at Fontenay to suppress these disturbances, and found his task very difficult, since the fiercest animosity had been engendered between the conflicting parties. Frightful atrocities marked these early hostilities, particularly on the part of the revolutionists, who generally prevailed over the scattered bands of peasants, who acted without concert among themselves. During the whole of 1792, the Bocage and the Marais were the theatres of this desultory warfare, in which the towns were arrayed against the country, and mutual acts of vengeance kept alive the deadliest hatred. It was not the genius of Jacobinism to attempt conciliation as a mode of appeasing troubles; and on the formation of the republic in September of that year, no respect was paid to the prejudices of the population, who revered the king as some tutelary power known to it only by a beneficent protection. At this time the Marquis de la Rouerie, a Breton noble, endeavoured to plan a general rising of the royalists throughout the west of France, and sought to draw the Vendéans into his scheme. But although he succeeded in forming an extensive organisation among the nobles of Brittany, he failed in gaining the adherence of the Vendean gentry, who had as yet taken no part in the revolts of the peasants. Rouerie's plans, meanwhile, were betrayed to the government, which took prompt measures to foil them, and seize his person. The retreat of the Prussians had discouraged his partisans, and he was driven to seek an asylum in woods and caves from the hot pursuit of his enemies. He found a resting-place at last in the house of a friend, where he died from grief, as is said, at the death of the king, on the 30th January 1793. His papers, however, were discovered by the republicans buried with himself under a tree, and twenty-five of his accomplices and abettors were arrested and conveyed to Paris. Twelve of these were executed in one day, exclaiming with their last breath '*Vive le roi!*' Three of the number were women, one of whom, Angelique Desilles, perished in lieu of her sister, whose name she had assumed, and whom she heroically personated before the Tribunal and on the scaffold.

The execution of Louis XVI. caused a thrill of horror to shoot through La Vendée, but still the impetus to a combined movement was wanting. It was at length supplied by the decree for

the levy of 300,000 men. The peasants were resolved not to serve the regicide republic, if they could not escape its thralldom. The drawing for the conscription was everywhere resisted, although attempted by the recruiting officers under cover of cannon. The exasperation of the peasants was boundless; they rushed upon the guns with clubs, beat out the brains of the cannoneers, and put the officers to flight. They soon found leaders among themselves, who conducted them to greater enterprises: Cathelineau, a wool pedler, Foret, Tonnelet, and Stofflet, gamekeepers, all headed bands of resolute men, who attacked the republican posts in various quarters, and met with the success that gave stability to the insurrection. In the course of March, several towns and forts were carried by the insurgents, despite their utter want of discipline, for which they made amends by courage and activity. Their mode of fighting was peculiar, and difficult to be withstood. The country being divided into innumerable small enclosures, surrounded by thick-set hedges, and traversed only by narrow paths imbedded in the foliage, they made ramparts of these leafy barricades, from which they shot their enemies with unerring aim; and having thrown them into disorder, sprang from their ambuscades, charged them from all points, and overwhelmed them before they had time for resistance. The conformation of the country likewise gave great facilities for surprises, in which the nimble peasants were singularly expert, and thus the republican troops were worsted in every engagement, and many hundreds of them killed or made prisoners. When the rising had attained this consistence, the nobles joined it, or rather were constrained by the peasants to do so. Of these the most distinguished by their subsequent careers were D'Elbée, Bonchamps, Lescure, and Larochejaquelein in the Bocage, and Charette in the Marais. The latter seized the isle of Noirmoutiers, which secured him a place of retreat, and a medium of communication with the allied fleets. He acted separately from the other chiefs, and in his jealousy of command, often refused to co-operate with them, whereby decisive blows failed in their effect. He was, nevertheless, the most formidable enemy of the republic, which conquered the powers of Europe, but could never subdue this intrepid partisan. The necessity of a single leader was felt ere long in the Bocage, and by the election of the nobles, Cathelineau was elevated to be generalissimo—a rare instance of aristocratic homage to plebeian merit. But the distinctions of rank had never been maintained in La Vendée with the stiffness and alienation of social pretensions elsewhere; the gentry arrogated no offensive superiority, and mingled with the peasants in familiar equality. They cheerfully ranged themselves under Cathelineau, who, at the head of 30,000 men, resolved to assault Thouars, a fortified town containing a considerable garrison, commanded by Queti-

neau, an officer of reputation. On the 4th May, the outworks were stormed, and Quetineau capitulated, to save the place from sack. This event opened the eyes of the Jacobins to the alarming nature of the insurrection, which they had hitherto contemned as a tissue of partial outbreaks. Twelve thousand men were forthwith selected from the sectional battalions of Paris, and by arbitrary mandate despatched to the scene of war, under Santerre and Westermann, who aspired to win other laurels than those of butchering defenceless Swiss guards. To equip and pay this force, the Commune levied a rateable contribution upon all who had incomes of above 1000 francs (£40) up to 50,000, the whole residue being appropriated in excess of 30,000 francs from larger incomes. Other communes and departments adopted similar measures with the approval of the Convention, which thereby sanctioned in them the exercise of independent sovereignty. But in such a crisis, scruples of authority were not to be weighed; and by this promptitude of action, an army of 40,000 men was collected before the last week of May to oppose the Vendéans. These had dispersed after their successes, and returned to their homes, whence they could never be kept long absent, having first appointed another general rendezvous for the 1st of June. Biron, removed from the army of the Rhine, commanded in chief the republican troops, who thus had at their head a duke, the representative of an illustrious line; whilst the soldiers of royalty were led by a pedler, whose name was now for the first time heard beyond the sphere of his humble calling. The pedler was more fortunate in his destiny than the duke; his followers were enthusiastically attached to him, and yielded him a willing obedience; he won with them many battles, and in the end fell with honour among them, sorrowing for his loss. The duke had unruly and mutinous contingents to fuse, raw and presumptuous officers to mould, rival authorities to contend with, jealous overseers to watch him. Thwarted on every side, he was unable to stem the tide of victory, and he perished ignominiously in the hands of the hangman. The strange contrast of position was exemplified and heightened by the manner of their deaths.*

Biron fixed his head-quarters in the city of Nantes, whence he kept guard on Charette in Lower Vendée, fearing greatly a descent of the British to his aid. He proposed to invade the insurgent country with four columns of 10,000 men each, starting from different points, and meeting in the centre. But the commanders of 'the Royal and Catholic Army,' as the Vendéans styled themselves, gave him no time to execute this purpose. Assuming

* Biron delivered a somewhat remarkable oration on the scaffold, considering the auditors to whom it was addressed—the savage atheists of Paris. 'I have been,' said the duke, 'faithless to my God, my order, and my king. I die full of faith and repentance.'—*Vend. Mil.* vol. i. p. 189.

the offensive, they attacked the republican detachments, broke them in all directions, and advanced upon Doué and Saumur. In front of the latter town, 20,000 Blues—by which name the republican forces were known in this war—stood behind strong intrenchments to receive them. On the 10th June, the Brigands—for the insurgents had accepted the title conferred on them by the Convention—40,000 strong, charged the formidable batteries with impetuous valour. In the fray Lescure was wounded; and the superstitious peasants, who believed him invulnerable, took fright and fled from the assault. They were rallied, however, and dividing into four parties, returned to the charge. Falling on their faces when they saw the flash from the guns, they jumped up again on hearing the report, and rushed forward, throwing themselves into the lines with resistless fury. After a desperate conflict, the Blues were totally vanquished, and retreated in confusion along the road to Tours, leaving Saumur in the hands of the conquerors. The trophies of this great victory were eighty pieces of cannon, 100,000 muskets, and nearly 11,000 prisoners. How to dispose of so many captives was a difficulty with the Brigands. The Convention had issued a decree of extermination against them, their wives, their children, the very land on which they lived; and they might with some show of justice retaliate the intended barbarity. But religion exercised over them its benign influence, unenlightened as it was. They contented themselves with following a practice which had on previous occasions been adopted. They shaved the heads of the prisoners, and exacted from them a pledge not again to serve in La Vendée, which, on the old royal maxim of 'No faith to be kept with rebels,' was constantly violated by the republicans. After gaining possession of the town, the first object with the Vendéans was to repair to the churches and return thanks to God for his succour in the battle; the second was to get drunk, and go to sleep. This was their uniform practice after fighting; and when the Blues came to know them better, they profited by the propensity, and often slaughtered the poor peasants fast-locked in helpless inebriety.

By the conquest of Saumur, the line of the Loire fell to the Vendéans, and the road to Paris lay invitingly open to them. Terrible as their name had become, and universal as was the revolt against the Jacobins, they must have encountered no material resistance; but in truth they were incapable of distant enterprises. After a few days' campaign, they longed to be at home again, and all the exhortations of priests and nobles failed to keep them steadfast to their colours. To defend their own hearths was the extent of their ambition; they had no love of adventure or thirst of acquisition beyond the view of their parish steeples. Besides, their leaders were infected with the error that had stopped the

progress of the allies in Flanders, though from much purer motives. They deemed it necessary to secure the fortresses in their rear, and especially to obtain a seaport by which they might receive assistance from England, as such they had reason to expect would be afforded them. It was accordingly resolved to besiege Nantes, in which undertaking Charette for the first time offered to co-operate with the other chiefs. He agreed to assault the city from the left bank of the Loire, whilst Cathelineau made his approaches on the right bank. He was in a position to do this with effect, as he had recently gained a signal victory over the republicans at Machecoul, sullied by the murder of 300 invalids in the hospitals, and driven them behind the walls of Nantes. There was thus a garrison of 10,000 men to defend the town, under the command of Canclaux and Beysser. Biron had moved into the neighbourhood of Les Sables and Rochelle to cover them from attack, but he hastened with all his forces to the relief of Nantes when it was known to be threatened with a siege. The Vendean chiefs summoned the garrison from Angers on the 20th June, and on the 29th invested the place. Their army was dwindled to little more than half its original number by the desertion of the peasants on the march, but Charette came up on his side with 20,000 men, flushed with victory and full of ardour. It was his province to carry the bridges across the Loire, whilst Cathelineau attempted to penetrate through the suburbs. The republicans offered a most stubborn opposition. Baco, the mayor of Nantes, a man of gigantic stature, planted himself in the van, and dealt destruction with invincible might. A Vendean measured him with his rifle, and shot him through the thigh. Borne to a wagon, he still waved his hand and cried, 'Courage, my friends, this is my triumphal car!' Cathelineau pressed vigorously into a suburb, and was on the point of capturing the enemy's artillery, when a ball struck him in the arm and lodged in the chest. He fell into the arms of his soldiers, who carried him from the field of battle. A rumour of his death immediately spread through the Vendean ranks, and caused an instant cessation from the attack. If the 'Saint of Anjou,' as he was called from his excessive piety, could be wounded, then indeed was the finger of God pointed against them. This implicit belief in the assurances of their priests, that a heavenly shield was interposed to protect the lives of their favourite chieftains, proved more detrimental than advantageous to the Vendean, for they were always struck with a panic when any one of them received a casualty. In the present instance it entailed their ruinous discomfiture. The whole besieging army on the right bank dispersed and vanished, flying into the interior of the country; Charette drew off his troops, and retired to the Marais. Such was the unfortunate issue to the Vendean of the siege of Nantes: the

death of Cathelineau was in itself a heavy calamity, and they lost their superiority over the republicans, who were inspirited to resume the offensive against them. The delivered city meanwhile was distracted by the feud between the Jacobins and Girondins, which, allayed for the moment by the common danger, broke out afresh after the retreat of the besiegers. The inhabitants generally inclined towards the Girondins; and the singular spectacle had been presented of a community, itself insurgent against the ruling power, beleaguered by rebels of another order the sworn enemies of both. But Canclaux siding with the Jacobins, gave them the preponderance, and they proceeded to fill the prisons with royalists and Girondins indiscriminately, pending the advent of the proconsul, who was to empty them after so fearful a fashion.

It was the peculiarity of the Vendéans, that if they were incapable of improving victory, they recovered from defeats with astonishing rapidity. The Jacobin agents truly said that the only way to subdue them was to exterminate or transplant them. At a signal from their leaders, they were up in arms, and ready to repel or attack a foe. Westermann had thought the opportunity favourable, when they were engaged in the siege of Nantes, for a bold irruption into their country; and with the concurrence of Biron, had started from Niort at the head of a body of men 5000 strong, called the German Legion, vastly superior in discipline to the rabble levies of Paris and other cities. He pushed successfully forward, slaying, pillaging, and devastating as became an orthodox republican; and on the 3d July entered Chatillon, the seat of the insurgent government. Here the peasants executed on him a happy surprise; they routed him, and pursued him to the hazard of his life until he escaped from their land. For this reverse both he and Biron, who had been repeatedly denounced as aristocrats for maintaining the necessity of discipline, were arrested and sent to Paris as prisoners, where Biron was condemned to death, but Westermann obtained his pardon, and returned to La Vendée. Labarolier succeeded to the dangerous command. Never was such an assemblage of desperadoes dignified with the name of an army as that he took under his orders. An equal collection of galley-slaves freed from their bonds would have been respectable in comparison. Bouchotte, the minister at war, had abandoned his department to the Anarchists, as the detestable Pache had previously done to the Jacobins, and the lowest ruffians of the capital received the commissions of general officers. Of these the chief were Ronsin, one of the disorganisers of Belgium; Rossignol, a journeyman jeweller; Momoro, a printer; Grammont, a playactor. Ronsin was appointed deputy-minister, and arrogated supervision over all the generals employed in La Vendée. He even contested the authority of the Conventional

commissioners, who likewise exercised control over the generals, contradicted their orders, and created by his outrageous conduct the utmost confusion. But the function he most delighted in was that of denouncing officers who essayed to discipline their soldiers; for the idea of imposing restraint, or inflicting punishment on sans-culottes, was treason against the majesty of the people. For this high crime he caused numbers to be sacrificed. Such a system bore its natural fruits. The troops were demoralised to the last degree, and the generals reduced to tremble before these minions of anarchy, who destroyed all the moral influence they might possess. Before his deposition, Biron had concerted a plan with Canclaux for the simultaneous invasion of La Vendée from different points with a force amounting altogether to 50,000 men. This plan was altered in its details, and Labaroliere set out with his gangs from Angers on the 12th July, to penetrate into the heart of the country. His track was marked by cruelties and atrocities such as no barbarians are recorded to have committed. But he speedily met with a just retribution. On the 18th, at Vihiers, the Vendéans attacked him, and though their principal leaders were absent, obtained a complete victory. The celebrated Abbé Bernier, incumbent of St Laud, who wielded a paramount influence throughout La Vendée, exhorted them to the combat; and, invigorated by his inspiring promises, they fell upon the republicans with such impetuosity, that they overthrew them at the first charge, and put them instantly to flight. Santerre, who was said by his own soldiers 'to have nothing of Mars but his beer,' in allusion to his old calling of a brewer, set the first example of cowardice, and saved himself by leaping over a wall. Bourbotte, a commissioner of the Convention, alone behaved with fortitude and heroism. He strove to rally the fugitives, but they were in too earnest a hurry to escape from the infuriated peasants. On all sides was heard the dastardly cry of '*Sauve qui peut!*' and he was borne along by the current upwards of two leagues. The Vendéans slew on this day 10,000 of their enemies; for they gave no quarter, and took a large quantity of artillery and ammunition. The defeat of Vihiers was decisive, and carried the terror of the Vendean arms to the highest pitch. Ronsin attributed it to two officers on the staff, who, despite the examples he had made, still ventured to cast out hints in favour of discipline. These were Menou and Berthier, and they were apprehended accordingly. Being sent to Paris for trial, they contrived to evade the common doom, and lived to reach high destinies. Charette was equally successful in the Marais, and expelled the republicans from the whole country with tremendous losses. Thus at the end of July, when the inroads of foreigners on all the frontiers were most threatening, the insurrection of La Vendée had attained a truly formidable aspect, and excited the greatest fears

of the Jacobins. They esteemed it with reason the chief peril of the republic; and Barrère said emphatically, in a report from the Committee of Public Safety, presented to the Convention on the 4th of August, 'Destroy La Vendée, and Valenciennes and Condé will no longer be in the power of the Austrian. Destroy La Vendée, and the British will no longer concern themselves about Dunkirk. Destroy La Vendée, and the Rhine will be delivered from the Prussians. Destroy La Vendée, and Spain will be repulsed by our victorious soldiers. Destroy La Vendée, and Lyons will no longer resist; Toulon will rise against the Spanish and British, and the spirit of Marseilles will swell to the height of the Revolution. In a word, every blow that you inflict on La Vendée will resound in the revolted cities, in the federalist departments, and on the invaded frontiers.'

It was in this desperate state of affairs that the Convention determined to celebrate the fourth anniversary of the Revolution, shifting the day of commemoration from the 14th July, which represented now a tame event, to the 10th of August, the era of the republican parturition. The acceptance of the constitution by the primary assemblies was likewise to be signalised. The Champ de Mars was appointed, as before, the scene of this grand and sombre federation, in which representatives from the 44,000 communes—lacking those only of Marseilles and La Vendée—swore fidelity to the republic one and indivisible, and to the constitution of 1793. Every art was studied to impart to this ceremony an imposing effect, to exalt and fire the imagination. The dangers of the country impressed it with a solemn character, and the pacification of Paris with the departments inspired the community of feeling which gave augury of a successful deliverance. The fervour of patriotism was excited to the highest pitch, but it was stamped with the darkest hues of Jacobinism. The delegates of the primary assemblies wrote to their constituents, 'One sentiment actuates all here. Our souls are blended in a common accord, and triumphant Liberty looks around on none but Jacobins, brethren and friends. The *Marais* is no more. We form here but one enormous and terrible MOUNTAIN, which will soon pour forth its fire on all royalists and partisans of tyranny. Perish the infamous libellers who have calumniated Paris!' They appeared at the bar of the Convention, and in the name of confederated France demanded laws of precaution against the *suspected*, and the levy in mass of the entire population. Danton's impetuous spirit responded to this animating summons. He was waning in influence, and his voice was heard almost for the last time, but still he spoke with his pristine vehemence. 'Hear them!' he cried; 'hear the deputies of the primary assemblies, who come amongst us to exercise the initiative in terror! Let the Convention manifest all its dignity, for it is invested with the

full force of the national will. By the roar of cannon we must notify the constitution to our enemies! Now is the moment to take the grand and final oath—that we all devote ourselves to death, or else we will annihilate the tyrants!’ The members rose spontaneously, and with enthusiastic shouts took the oath as he proposed. The delegates, the spectators, the whole people, repeated it and in one reverberating echo death to France or to the leagued tyrants was vowed. But the Convention cooled from this first delirium; and lest it should transgress, deferred with humility to its paramount committee as the organ of volition. The Committee of Public Safety was now modelled as it definitively remained; Robespierre, Collot d’Herbois, and Billaud-Varennes had been added to it, together with Carnot, an officer and deputy who had been employed in the Army of the North after Lafayette’s defection, and who soon rendered his name celebrated in Europe for the ability he displayed in directing the operations of war. In a few days Barrère, its universal reporter, developed the views of the Committee, harmonious with the predominant ideas so hotly fermenting, in a very striking and succinct form. ‘Liberty,’ he said, ‘has become the creditor of every citizen; some owe it their industry, others their fortune; some their counsels, others their arms; all owe it their lives. Hence, therefore, the whole French people, of every age and sex, are called by their country to defend liberty. All physical and moral powers, all political and industrial resources, have accrued to it; the metals and the elements are alike its tributaries. Each, then, must occupy his post in the national and military movement in preparation. The young men will fight; the married will forge arms, transport baggage and artillery, provide subsistence; the women will make clothes and tents for the soldiers, and tend the wounded in the hospitals; the children will be taught to prepare lint and bandages; the old men, resuming the mission they had amongst the ancients, will frequent the public places, and by their discourses inflame the courage of the young warriors, propagate the hatred of kings, and uphold the unity of the republic. The national edifices will be converted into barracks, the public places into workshops; the mould of cellars will serve to prepare saltpetre; all saddle-horses will be appropriated for the cavalry, all draught-horses for the artillery; fowlingpieces, swords, and pikes will suffice for the service of the interior. THE REPUBLIC IS AS A BESIEGED CITY, AND ALL FRANCE MUST BECOME A VAST CAMP!’

Such was the resolution of the Jacobin government to resist its multifarious foes. Measures in accordance with it were immediately decreed. The levy in mass was ordered; all unmarried males from eighteen to twenty-five years of age were forthwith to assemble in the district towns, for the purpose of being trained, and marched off to the frontiers; those between twenty-five and

thirty were to keep in readiness for active service, and meanwhile perform the home duty; the rest, up to sixty, were to be disposable when needed. Commissioners were to proceed into every quarter of France to enforce this levy, armed with despotic powers. Not only the population, but the property and substance of the country, were dedicated to the great object of its defence. Requisitions of money, commodities, horses, arms, all things requisite for the use of armies, were authorised to be made by the commissioners. Manufactories of cannon and muskets were to be established in every town; immense forges were at once erected in the public gardens of Paris, and smelting-furnaces along the banks of the Seine. Artisans fitted for such works were constrained to labour at them; and there being but little employment for jewellers or clock and watch makers, they were appointed to take part in this task. Revolutionary committees were organised in every commune and in all the sections of Paris, to keep constant watch on the progress of these works, to apprehend idlers, and to award premiums. Forty sous a day were allotted to every indigent person who gave his services to the republic either by bodily labour or by attending patriotic clubs and assemblies. So great was the energy brought into play by these means, that 1000 muskets a day were shortly manufactured in Paris alone. Fourteen armies were set on foot, forming an aggregate force of 1,200,000 soldiers. These were directed to the different scenes of warfare, where, under the guiding hand of Carnot, they soon availed to change the face of affairs.

The want of money was the chief difficulty to obviate. As it had originally caused the Revolution, so it continued to attend its course. When the system of confiscations commenced, a basis was supposed to be obtained for the issue of paper, bearing the name of assignats, specially hypothecated on the property of the nation. This property, by successive escheats, became of enormous magnitude. It was valued at the prodigious sum of 7,000,000,000 francs (£280,000,000 sterling). Such a mass of real estate—consisting of extensive domains, forests, palaces, castles, and houses—was of course not easily vendible, and yet, unconvertible into specie, it formed the sole resource of the Revolution. The interest on the old debts of the monarchy more than absorbed the produce of the taxes, even if they had been collected on their former scale; but in truth two of their main branches were lopped off. From the contraction of foreign commerce, the receipt of customs-duties was insignificant; whilst, to relieve the poorer classes, all indirect taxes or duties of excise had been removed. The only efficient sources of income that remained were the property tax and the stamp and registration duties, which, amidst the disorders of the times, were either imperfectly collected, or barren of proceeds. Hence the government

may be said to have had scarcely any regular revenue either to maintain the establishments of the State, to pay its annuitants, or to defray the extraordinary charges of war. It was reduced to live, therefore, on anticipations, and it met all demands by the ready expedient of fabricating assignats. The issue of these consequently became excessive, and amounted at this period to nearly 4,000,000,000 francs, or £160,000,000 sterling.* In proportion as the emissions exceeded the natural wants of the community, the assignats declined in value, until they were not exchangeable at a tenth, a twentieth, a fiftieth of their nominal worth. The Jacobins, attempting to overrule by force the most inevitable tendencies, insisted that they should pass current for their full expressed value, and made it penal to give or take them on other conditions. Further, to banish all rivalry with them in circulation, the use of gold and silver as a medium of exchange was prohibited under the like safeguard; and chartered companies, such as insurance offices and banks, with transferable shares, were compelled to wind up their accounts. Still the object was not attained; if the assignats were taken in payment at their nominal value, the prices of commodities were raised in a proportionable ratio. To counteract this infallible consequence, the *maximum* was devised. An arbitrary price was fixed, first on the chief necessities of life—corn and bread; and lastly on all articles of consumption and general use at which dealers were bound to sell. Still the object was not attained; dealers might withhold supplies, might refuse to sell their goods, might even cease to trade. It was the climax of the system, therefore, to render it death for them to do any of these things. They were classed as *forestallers* in such cases, and summarily consigned to the guillotine. The effect of these laws tended to the utter ruin of the commercial and trading classes, but the assignats were at least bolstered up for the time, and served the immediate exigencies of the government. As a currency, they might have answered all the purposes of money, if their superabundance had not glutted the circulation, since they possessed the qualities necessary for every domestic contingency. They could be paid in discharge of taxes, and, more than all, could be converted into heritable securities by purchases of the national property. Thus they were continually floating back into the public exchequer, and ought to have been then destroyed to preserve the requisite equilibrium; but the expenditure was so reckless and enormous, the principles of prudence so disparaged,

* Assignats were issued not only for the purposes of the Revolution, but also, according to certain English authorities, with the design of inundating England with them, and ruining the Bank of England. How such a scheme was to be effected by such means, it is impossible to guess; but Pitt was alarmed at the bugbear, and got an act passed prohibiting the circulation of French assignats in Great Britain.—*Tom. Pitt*, vol. iii. p. 483.

that they were immediately re-issued upon the first emergency. Nevertheless the Committee of Public Safety felt it imperative to pause in this career of incessant emission. To meet the present crisis, it resolved to contract a loan. The ordinary accessories to such an operation were wanting, it is true; capitalists were not disposed to intrust their money to Jacobin keeping, and no proposals, however advantageous, would entice them to do so. But they could be forced, and that was sufficient. A loan of 1,000,000,000 francs was accordingly decreed, to be assessed by the communes on all persons within their jurisdictions possessed of incomes exceeding 1000 francs. From that sum to 10,000, one-tenth was to be taken; above the latter amount, 1000 was to be allowed for each individual in a family beyond the 10,000, and all the rest appropriated for behoof of the State. In forming their estimates of fortunes, the communes were invested with arbitrary powers of adjudication; and from their decision lay no appeal. By this expedient the rich were compelled either to buy national domains, or to return into the exchequer 1,000,000,000 of assignats, and rank as creditors of the State for the amount. Whichever course they adopted, the design of the Committee was fulfilled, as the credit of the assignats would be enhanced, and the interests of the yet remaining aristocratic classes linked more closely to the cause of the Revolution. This latter purpose was still further promoted by the amalgamation of all the existing debts of the country into one GREAT BOOK, whereby the distinctions of origins were obliterated, insomuch that Cambon, who almost exclusively managed the finance department, boasted with exultation, 'Now it shall come to pass that the debt contracted by despotism will not be distinguishable from that contracted by the Revolution, and I defy *Monseigneur Despotism*, if he rise from the grave, to recognise his old debt when it is confounded with the new one. This operation effected, you will see the capitalist—who desires a king because he has a king for his debtor, and who fears to lose his investment unless his debtor be restored—turn with favour to the republic which has become his debtor, for the same reason that he will fear to lose his cash by its subversion.'

That these measures were despotic, violent, and, upon abstract principles, most unjust, cannot be doubted; but there is something inexpressibly grand in this government of sans-culottes, far from being abashed or crestfallen at the dangers environing it, preparing with unabated temerity to encounter and repel the assaults of all the monarchs of confederated Europe. It dealt its blows with a crushing hand, nor was long in striking them. Houchard was appointed to replace Kilmaine in command of the Army of the North. It was increased in number to 50,000 men, and he had positive injunctions to annihilate the Duke of York. The French justly regarded the British government as their most

implacable and formidable foe, and their animosity was deadly against it. The Convention had just proclaimed Pitt the enemy of the human race, and on the other hand the British Parliament rang with the most furious diatribes against the public men of France. Thus the mutual hatred of the nations was aggravated, until it reached a height of frenzy disgraceful to an age of civilisation. The Committee of Public Safety ordered its generals to give no quarter to the English; and Lord Auckland, ambassador to Holland, denounced in a diplomatic note the representatives of the French people as a pack of scoundrels,* and called upon the Dutch government to hang the four deputies, who had been betrayed by Dumouriez, as outcasts from the pale of society, for having voted the death of Louis XVI. The French soldiers were too brave to execute the barbarous mandate of the Committee, and the States-General too sage to heed the rabid invocation of the minister; but the atrocity of the sentiments bespeaks the virulence of the respective governments. It was therefore with unfeigned satisfaction that Carnot observed the faulty dispositions of the Duke of York, and he directed on that incapable personage the full stream of the war. The Austrians were engaged in besieging Quesnoy, intending afterwards to reduce Maubeuge. The promiscuous host known as the British, comprehending Dutch, Hanoverians, Hessians, and other German mercenaries, had invested Dunkirk, after allowing the French sufficient time to fortify, garrison, and provision it. The Duke of York, in person, commanded the besieging force, Marshal Freytag the covering army of 20,000 men stationed at Furnes, and the Prince of Orange a corps of observation posted far away at Menin. Thus separated, they presented a tempting opportunity for an attack on them in detail. Carnot had instilled into Houchard the great tactic of fighting in mass, of concentrating forces on a particular point, and of striking decisive blows on scattered divisions. This was the new strategy of war invented by republican genius, which was to confound so signally the antiquated notions of military art. Houchard, however, was of the old school, and lacked audacity of character to act on bold and original suggestions. To this the Duke of York owed his preservation from destruction, whilst, for marring the hopes of that cherished catastrophe, the French general lost his head. In the beginning of September he took the field. Souham and Hoche, a young hero at whose name England was hereafter to quake, were shut up in Dunkirk, with 10,000 men. Houchard began with a demonstration towards

* It was not the Jacobins he thus stigmatised, but the members of the first National Assembly convoked by the king. The shocking character of his manifesto was arraigned by Fox in the House of Commons, but Pitt defended him, and rewarded him by conferring on him a British peerage, he being previously only an Irish peer.

Menin, which led to nothing, and then advanced against Freytag. With him he fought three several actions, the last at Hondshoote, and completely defeated him. At the same time York was attacked by Hoche, and the bewildered prince made a precipitate retreat. Abandoning his tents, baggage, and superb train of artillery, he moved off under cover of the night on the 8th September, and joined the shattered forces of Freytag. Houchard lingered, and gave them time to intrench themselves in a fortified camp, which he deemed too strong to be carried. Wishing also to clear his rear, he turned aside to dislodge the Prince of Orange from Menin. This he had some difficulty in doing, as the prince, expecting to be reinforced by Beaulieu, detached for that purpose by Coburg, obstinately defended his position. After two days' fighting, he was eventually driven from it with great slaughter on the 13th, and Houchard pushed on to Courtray. On the road he fell in with Beaulieu, and a desperate conflict ensued. Victory was inclining to the French, when a corps of Austrian cavalry threatening to outflank their army, it was seized with a panic, and fled in the utmost disorder, not pausing until it reached the walls of Lille. Already marked for the guillotine by the Committee, for not following up his success against York, Houchard was immediately arrested, and despatched to the Revolutionary Tribunal. Jourdan succeeded him in the command, undeterred by the fate of his predecessors. Promotion was rapid in the republican ranks; he rose from colonel to be generalissimo in a few weeks. Meanwhile the Austrians had taken Quesnoy, after a siege of fifteen days, and proceeded to invest Maubeuge. After the fatal consequences of dividing their forces had been shown by the disastrous affair of Dunkirk, the allies joined again, and presented a formidable array of 100,000 men. The importance of saving Maubeuge was sensibly felt by the Committee of Public Safety, and Carnot visited Jourdan in person, to impress on him his lessons. Dispositions were made for an attack on the covering army of the Austrians about 40,000 strong, 35,000 being employed in the siege, and the remainder stationed on the other bank of the Sambre. From this dissemination of the allies, the French were superior in number, though the greater part were of the new levy. They had enjoyed the advantage of a month's training, however, and being distributed into the older battalions, they were encouraged by the example of comrades who, in comparison, were veterans. Jourdan advanced with confidence, and gave battle to the Prince of Coburg on the 16th October, at Wagnies. The Duke of York hastened to take part in the engagement, but arrived too late. He had the melancholy satisfaction of joining Coburg after he had been defeated, and had recrossed the Sambre with the loss of 6000 men. The siege of Maubeuge was forthwith raised; and, instructed by their calamities, the allies at last actu-

ally concentrated their forces between the Sambre and the Scheldt, to resist the anticipated onslaught of the French. But Carnot and Jourdan concurred in thinking the adventure too perilous, although the Committee at Paris issued positive orders that the enemy should be driven over the frontier at any hazard of experiment. With the momentous victory of Watignies, therefore, the campaign of 1793 closed in Flanders, the allies having gained in the course of it two or three frontier fortresses, and sustained sundry humiliating reverses. With their fine-disciplined army of 120,000 men they might have done more, and the insignificant result was tantamount to a total discomfiture. The French had all the glory of a successful defence, the Austrians and British the shame of a defeated cupidity.

The king of Prussia had passed his time very quietly at Mayence, rather as a spectator of the war than a participator in it. Full of his nefarious designs against Poland, he was at open variance with Austria, who was not included in the scheme of spoliation contemplated by him and Catherine of Russia. This nettled the court of Vienna very considerably, and these virtuous allies against French violence indulged in some peculiarly uncivil language towards each other on the occasion. Thus the partition of Poland, the monster crime of the eighteenth century, recoiled upon its perpetrators; and in so far as it saved France from a similar fate, has proved auspicious to the general cause of human enfranchisement. So are the ways of the wicked made conducive by an all-disposing Deity to the furtherance of his beneficent purposes! From his inactivity, the French themselves at length startled the Prussian monarch. The names of celebrated warriors come rapidly forth, for the Revolution was a very hotbed of genius. Moreau commanded the French army of the Moselle. It had been largely reinforced, like all the others, by the new levies, and numbered nearly 40,000 men. The Committee was instant for offensive operations, and to disobey it was not the part of a general who valued his head. On the 14th September, Moreau attacked the Duke of Brunswick in his position at Pirmasens, but found him too strongly intrenched. He was repulsed with the loss of 4000 men and twenty-two pieces of cannon. No attempt was made by the Prussians to improve their victory, and the king took this opportunity of quitting the scene of warfare, and retiring to Berlin. He perceived that Austria was plotting with the nobles of Alsace, and he suspected the truth, that she designed to appropriate that province. This confirmed him in his repugnance to risk his soldiers for the aggrandisement of a hated rival, and supplied him with an additional motive for promptly maturing his individual project of robbery. So he posted to his capital, and left Brunswick behind him, with instructions to be guarded

in the use of his troops. Wurmser, the imperial commander, was urgent for a combined assault on the lines of Weissenburg, behind which the French were intrenched. He could not prevail upon Brunswick to move, however, until the 13th of October, on which day those celebrated lines were attacked along their whole extent, and after a tremendous combat, stormed by the allies. Instead of pursuing the French, who retreated to Haguenau upon the Lauter, Brunswick and Wurmser began to quarrel, and before they could settle their differences, the Committee was prepared to revenge on them its recent disaster. It sent as commissioners St Just and Lebas to the theatre of operations, with dictatorial powers; Pichegru was nominated to the command of the army of the Rhine, Hoche to that of the army of the Moselle. Several partial engagements took place during the month of November, and Hoche experienced a terrible defeat at Kayerslautern, in the heart of the Vosges mountains, on the 30th. He was not disheartened, nevertheless; and the Committee, sensible of his zeal and ability, not only pardoned his ill success, but appointed him generalissimo of both armies. He soon justified this extraordinary confidence. He retook the lines of Weissenburg; raised the siege of Landau, which had been invested by the Prussians; and finally, on the 26th of December, drove the allies with precipitation across the Rhine, occupying the Palatinate to the gates of Mannheim. France was in the end, accordingly, victorious on this frontier also; reverses had only stimulated her to renewed exertions, and the haughty invaders, who had threatened her liberties and existence, were once more ignominiously expelled from her territory.

On the Italian frontier, too, the star of the republic was in the ascendant. Kellermann hunted the Piedmontese out of Savoy with extraordinary ease, and drove them into the fastnesses of the Alps; but on the coast a serious effort was at length made to reconquer the county of Nice. The king of Sardinia, dissatisfied with the inaction of his generals, repaired in person to head his troops. On the 8th September he attacked the French in their camp, but making no impression on it, through his unskilful combinations, he abandoned the attempt, and returned in disgust to Turin. The republic had nothing more to fear from him, and in time made him pay dearly for his share in the crusade against it. On the side of the Pyrenees, Ricardos maintained his superiority, and gained a victory over the French at Truillas on the 22d September, but he hazarded no enterprise of moment. He secured the line of the Tech, reduced the fortresses of Port-Vendre and Collioure, and quartered his army for the winter on the French soil. On the west side of the isthmus equal caution was manifested; and the Spanish invasion, which had been commenced with such spirit, and which might have proved so dangerous from

the insurrectionary state of the south and west of France, ceased to possess any feature of interest. Thus the campaign of 1793 closed on all the frontiers, if not to the advantage of France, at least not to her sensible injury.

In the interior, the Jacobins had other more inglorious victories to win. Besides La Vendée, Lyons, Marseilles, and Toulon remained to be subdued. The first, from being the seat of a Girondin insurrection, had become the great focus of a counter-revolutionary or royalist movement. In the beginning it professed allegiance to the Convention, but refused to obtemper its decrees; in the end it hoisted the standard of revolt, and instituted a provisional government for the south of France. This concurring with Houchard's misfortune at Menin, and with fresh disasters in La Vendée, induced the last decisive measures for confirming the rule of the Jacobins. In despite of the newly-adopted constitution, it was determined that the Convention should continue permanent, and the government be constituted revolutionarily until peace. Supreme power was vested in the Committee of Public Safety, which was to report its proceedings once a week to the Convention, and under its authority were placed the committees of public security and of subsistences—the one charged with the administration of the police, the other with the superintendence of markets and dealings under the law of the maximum throughout the republic. The formation of a revolutionary army was decreed, to be attached to the government, and composed of 6000 men, with 1200 artillerymen. This army was levied in the faubourgs of Paris, and the command of it given to Ronsin, recalled from La Vendée. The general imprisonment of all suspected persons, demanded by the federates on the 10th of August, and repeatedly since by the Jacobin Club, was ordained by a decree called the Law of the Suspected. In this category were included all who had in any way shown themselves partisans of royalty or federalism, the relations of emigrants and former nobles who had not constantly manifested attachment to the Revolution. In addition to the ordinary prisons, which were incapable of holding so vast a number of captives, the national buildings were fitted up for the detention of prisoners. Additional facilities for the despatch of trials were given to the Revolutionary Tribunal, which was empowered to condemn on the moral persuasion of guilt, without the adducement of actual proof. Rapidity was the soul of government, the Jacobins declared; by promptitude and vigour all things were to be accomplished; action must be incessant, even to the working of the guillotine. With their prodigious energy, therefore, arose a fearful thirst of blood. Opposition maddened them to fury, and they committed atrocities which have no palliation in necessity. Fanaticism may be pleaded in their behalf, but it was a fanaticism of the most revolting character. They were the apostles of a new

creed, and all who were not with them were against them. They thought themselves the regenerators of mankind, the aborigines of a virgin world. Hence every memento of the past was to be obliterated. They abolished the Christian religion as an impious superstition, and prohibited the exercise of its rites. Gobel, Archbishop of Paris, attended by his suffragans and clergy, appeared at the bar of the Convention, to abjure his faith, and to acknowledge it as an imposition of priestcraft. The Commune of Paris proclaimed Reason to be the only god of free men, and solemnly installed the wife of Momoro as its visible type in the magnificent temple of Notre-Dame. The royal tombs of St Denis were burst open, and the bodies of monarchs, princes, generals, and statesmen thrown into pits of quicklime. Of all the illustrious dead there interred, the body of Turenne alone was preserved, and that from the accident of its being rescued as a mummy to be exhibited in a museum. Lastly, the Gregorian Calendar, and the existing system of weights and measures, were abrogated. The new arrangement of time had the merit only of originality. The era dated from the 22d September 1792, the day on which the republic was founded. The year was to consist of twelve months, each having thirty days, and they received names corresponding to the aspect of nature in their course. Germinal, Floreal, and Prairial were the three months of spring; Messidor, Thermidor, and Fructidor, those of summer; Vendemiaire, Brumaire, and Frimaire, those of autumn; Nivose, Pluviose, and Ventose, those of winter. Five intercalary days completed the annual revolution, and these were called *Sans-Culottides*, and dedicated to festivals. The month was divided into decades of ten days each, the last of which, the *decadi*, took in some measure the place of Sunday, and was to be observed as a holiday. Such was the new republican calendar; such the complete extinction of the past and isolation from the rest of the world.

The beautiful city of Lyons—second only to Paris in extent and in the stateliness of its buildings, the mart of commerce, the seat of the silk manufacture, hitherto the source of redundant wealth to France, and the great staple of her trade with foreign nations—was now to bear the brunt of Jacobin vengeance. It was decreed by the Convention that it should be razed to the ground. But its inhabitants made a vigorous resistance, relying both upon the arrival of the Piedmontese, whom emigrant emissaries assured them were on the march with 50,000 men, and upon the co-operation of the other insurgent cities. They were deceived in both expectations, and reduced to depend on their own resources. Dubois-Crancé, a deputy of the Convention, first appeared to summon them to surrender, but they returned an answer of defiance. As he had only 5000 men, he could do little more than attempt to intercept their supplies of provisions. This imperfect

blockade was ill suited to the impatience of the Jacobins. Fresh commissioners were sent to raise levies of peasants, and among them Couthon, a member of the Committee of Public Safety. This man was paralytic, and had to be carried about in a litter; but he possessed a persuasive eloquence and an indomitable energy. He so wrought upon the peasants of the Puy-de-Dome and the Auvergne, that he speedily mustered 40,000 of them, and led them to the walls of Lyons. The besieging army had been otherwise reinforced in the interim, and now amounted to 60,000 men. Couthon determined that an immediate assault should be made upon the city; Dubois-Crancé, who was himself an engineer, remonstrated, alleging the undisciplined condition of the troops. He proposed that the forts should be reduced in a regular manner, and the operations of the siege conducted according to the rules of art, the more especially as the Lyonnese were almost on the verge of famine. The advice was sound, but injudicious in the temper of the times. To the list of revolutionary heresies had been added scepticism on the score of fighting in mass, and all who were insensible or dubious of its certain merits in every contingency ran the risk of denunciation. Crancé, accordingly, fell into immediate disgrace, and was recalled to Paris to defend himself. Couthon remained to carry out his plans, unmolested by the protests of military experience. Before ordering the assault, however, he sent a last summons to the besieged on the 7th October, and a parley ensued. Some of the redoubts defending the city had been already taken, and part of the city laid in ashes by a bombardment; the Lyonnese, moreover, were intimidated by the mass of forces collected against them, ignorant, possibly, of their untutored state. Nevertheless, a mutual cannonade was maintained for some time, until at length a deputation appeared to negotiate for a surrender. Couthon would grant no terms; and whilst the discussion was still going on, a republican column penetrated into the city, and the whole army followed. It had been deserted, in fact, by all the ringleaders of the revolt, of whom Pécy was the chief, who fled by an unguarded outlet, to the number of 2000, in the direction of Switzerland. They were intercepted on their way by the peasants, and cut to pieces, with the exception of eighty, who alone escaped of the whole number. Couthon made his entry into Lyons on the morning of the 9th, amid the exaltations of the Jacobins, but to the direful consternation of the inhabitants at large, who trembled with forebodings of the fate that might befall them.

The subjugation of Lyons occasioned extravagant joy at Paris, but suggested no ideas of clemency. On the contrary, the Convention instantly issued the most horrible decree that was ever fulminated by a revengeful conqueror. It consisted of several articles, the most prominent of which were, that the city of Lyons

should be destroyed, with the exception of the manufactories and public edifices; that its name should be changed to *Commune-Affranchie*, and a monument erected on its ruins, with the inscription—*Lyons made war upon liberty; Lyons is no more!* A military commission was established to try the inhabitants, and three deputies, Collot d'Herbois, Fouché, and Montaut, were appointed, together with fifty noted Jacobins of Paris, to put these measures of vengeance into execution. Ronsin, with 2000 men of the revolutionary army, accompanied them, followed by a movable guillotine. The commissioners only too truly executed the mandate of the Convention. Such a scene was never realised since the creation of the world. At first houses were demolished in the ordinary way by pickaxes, and some forms were gone through before condemning victims to the guillotine. But these processes soon appeared too slow to the ardent imagination of Collot d'Herbois, who had once been hissed from the stage in this very city, now subjected to his brutal caprice. He had the streets undermined and blown up with gunpowder. The magnificent square of Bellecour, the chief ornament of the place, was converted into a heap of ruins, in which state it remained until Napoleon restored it in the heyday of his power. The guillotine was discarded as too tardy an instrument of death; batteries of cannon were reared, and parties of fifty, sixty, a hundred, destroyed at one time with grape shot. As the work proceeded, the fury and barbarity of the commissioners grew in enormity; they had bands of 200 people, men and women, seized almost indiscriminately, condemned unheard by the military commission, and hurried to a field, where, being tied by a cord to a row of trees, they were shot by platoons of soldiers. Naturally few were killed by the first discharge: amid the shrieks of the wounded the soldiers reloaded their pieces, and poured in a second volley; so a third or a fourth, until all being not dead, they drew their swords, and completed the butchery. Collot and Fouché viewed the spectacle from an eminence through a telescope. Sometimes on these occasions persons suffered erroneously; carried along in the crowd, they were involved among the victims, and bound to the fatal cord, despite their protestations of the mistake. When it was found that there were more than had been condemned, a representation of the fact was made to Collot, who observed in reply, 'What signifies it that there are too many? If they die to-day, they cannot die to-morrow.' In the course of five months this detestable monster thus murdered upwards of 6000 people, being the merchants, traders, and manufacturers of the place, with their wives and families.* The waters of the Rhone were poisoned

* The savage joy experienced by the perpetrators of these massacres would be incredible, if they had not themselves recorded it. The letters of Collot and Fouché to the Committee are filled with expressions of intense satisfaction as the

with the multitude of dead bodies, and the city itself, so late the emporium of industry and wealth, was reduced to a desert.

In their revolt against the Jacobins, the people of Marseilles had not displayed that energy which distinguished their efforts against the royal power. They had enrolled an army of 5000 men, and marched as far as Avignon with the intention of joining the Lyonnese; but there they had been met by Cartaux, detached by Dubois-Crancé at the head of numerous levies, and driven back across the Durance. Retreating through Aix, they were attacked on the 24th August by Doppet, with Cartaux's vanguard, and some of them going over to the enemy, they were easily defeated. Cartaux entered Marseilles on the following day, many thousands of the inhabitants flying to Toulon to escape his wrath. The rule of the Jacobin municipality was restored, and with it the ceaseless action of the guillotine. As most of the counter-revolutionists had fled, the cruelties exercised at Marseilles were, however, comparatively slight, and only a few hundred lives were sacrificed. Greater vengeance was wreaked at Bordeaux, although it had not offered any active resistance. Being the capital of the Gironde, it was the especial mark of Jacobin ferocity. Commissioners were sent to it, of whom the chief was Tallien, who encamped at La Reole with part of the revolutionary army, and proclaimed martial law throughout the department. They boasted that their mission was 'to *sans-culottise* the inhabitants, destroy the mercantile aristocracy, phlebotomise purses, and level heads,' which objects they proceeded to accomplish. Bordeaux being the principal place of export for wines—next to silk, the most important and lucrative branch of the foreign trade of France—it contained a great many wealthy merchants, and enjoyed a high degree of prosperity. It offered a rich harvest of speculation, therefore, to the Jacobin envoys, who had practical views, and were intent on the accumulation of plunder. Hence their confiscations kept pace with their executions; and every person of property, if he saved his head, had at least to surrender his possessions in lieu of it.* Bordeaux was utterly ruined, whilst

destruction and slaughter advanced in magnitude. One of the judges of the tribunal wrote in the following strain to a friend:—'What enjoyment thou wouldst have felt if thou hadst yesterday witnessed justice executed upon 209 wretches! What majesty!—how imposing a sight! The whole was edifying. How many scoundrels bit the dust that day! What stability does this give to the republic! Truly it was a spectacle worthy of liberty!'—*Buzot's Mem. Recherches, &c.* p. 89.

* The decree upon which they acted was in these terms: 'The property of patriots is inviolable and sacred; the property of persons known to be enemies of the Revolution is to be sequestered for the benefit of the republic.' The following is the form of the mandates issued by them:—

'*Death to the enemies of the people!*—Upon pain of being treated revolutionarily, the Widow Vaye will pay within three hours to the chest of the revolutionary commission, into the hands of Citizen Lemoissant, one of its members, the sum of 3000 livres.' This is the copy of an order preserved by Guadet.—*Buz.* p. 43.

some of the smaller towns in the province were set on fire, and burnt to the ground with many of their inhabitants. Upwards of three thousand persons were massacred, and the whole country ravaged like a wilderness. Yet dreadful as was the vengeance administered on the Gironde, it fell short of that in store for the unfortunate city of Toulon. It certainly was more guilty than any of the rest, since it had proved traitorous to the independence of the nation. After the fall of Marseilles, the bulk of its inhabitants saw no hope of safety but by calling in the aid of the allies, and they applied accordingly to Admiral Hood, who was cruising off the port with his fleet. He readily embraced the invitation, and entering the harbour, took possession of the place in the name of Louis XVII., promising, in a proclamation, to restore it and the ships of war it contained on the consummation of peace. He was soon after joined by the Spanish fleet, and General O'Hara arrived from Gibraltar to take the command of the garrison, which amounted to 17,000 men—a heterogeneous compound of French, Spaniards, Piedmontese, Neapolitans, and British. The Spaniards claimed to exercise the chief command, and produced a commission from the king of Spain to General Valdez, authorising him to assume it, so that disunion, the usual attendant of the councils of the allies, paralysed their exertions, and led to recriminations of treachery. They were allowed, however, ample time to perfect the defences, inasmuch as the French government could not send a sufficient force to undertake the siege until after the reduction of Lyons. It was not, therefore, until the middle of November that General Dugommier invested the place with nearly 30,000 men. He had under him a young officer in command of the artillery, Bonaparte by name, who, from the superior intelligence he displayed, was left to conduct the main operations of the siege. Bonaparte perceived that a fort commanding the harbour where the fleet lay, situated on a promontory so strongly fortified that it was called the Little Gibraltar, was the master-point to be conquered. He directed his principal efforts, therefore, to carry it. In this, on the 13th December, he succeeded by a midnight assault in the midst of a terrific tempest. He immediately prepared to open a cannonade on the British fleet, but Hood prudently slipped his cables, and stood out into the outer road. Deeming the place henceforth untenable, the allies resolved to evacuate it. The removal of the sick and wounded on board the ships gave the inhabitants warning of their intention. A scene ensued which, for its astounding horrors, stands almost unparalleled. Thousands of fugitives hurried to the harbour, clamouring to be carried on board the fleet, bearing with them such property as they could hastily seize; old and young—men, women, and children—mingled in a promiscuous throng, rent the air with piteous lamentations to be saved from the unrelenting Jacobins.

The British and Spaniards sent all the boats they could spare to receive these wretched exiles, but in the eagerness of embarkation many were swamped, and soon the harbour floated with numerous dead bodies. Meanwhile the galley slaves burst from bondage, and commenced to plunder and massacre. The arsenal was set on fire, and the conflagration quickly spreading, notwithstanding the night was calm, several noble ships of the line and frigates were all at once in flames. A vessel loaded with gunpowder blew up, and drowned for a moment all noises but that of its own explosion. The republicans poured down from the heights tremendous volleys of grape, and pressing over the ramparts, penetrated into the town. The last British boats, under the charge of Sir Sidney Smith, one of the most heroic naval officers of his day, narrowly escaped being captured or sunk from the pertinacious efforts made to save the inhabitants. In all, about 14,000 of them were ultimately carried on board the fleet. Of 31 ships of the line, and 15 frigates lying in Toulon harbour when the British first entered it, 9 ships and 3 frigates were burnt, 4 ships and 7 frigates were seized by the British, 1 frigate by the Sardinians, 18 ships and 4 frigates left to the French. This was a dreadful blow to the French navy, which crippled it for the remainder of the war, and naturally excited the fiercest indignation of the Jacobins. It is a nice point of casuistry to determine how far the British were justified in destroying or appropriating vessels committed to their custody for behoof of France; but however the mere abstract question may stand as a riddle of logic, it is clear they reaped a signal advantage from the breach of trust; and in war it is a maxim that the principles of right being in abeyance, all advantages are legitimate.

As the British were out of their reach, the Jacobins concentrated the weight of their baffled rage on the hapless remnant of the Toulonnese. A similar decree to that respecting Lyons was passed by the Convention. The name of Toulon was to be changed to Port de la Montagne, and the city razed to the ground, with the exception of the naval and military establishments. A military commission was instituted to try prisoners, and the usual revolutionary measures adopted to insure a prompt and copious flow of blood. The commissioners of the Convention at the siege of Toulon were Fréron, Robespierre the younger, and Barras, and they had personally participated in its dangers. They proved worthy emulators of their colleagues on similar errands, in exhausting the spirit of desolation and vengeance. They collected 12,000 masons from the neighbouring departments for the purpose of demolishing the town. They struck off heads at the rate of two hundred a day.* But after a time, the fashion of the

* This is the account given in their own despatches to the Committee of Public Safety. 'The work goes bravely on here,' they said; 'we have made a

fusillade or battue, set by Collot d'Herbois at Lyons, was deemed preferable, and the victims were bound in bands of two and three hundred to be shot by soldiers, or torn to pieces by batteries of grape. At length it was determined to have one wholesale slaughter to terminate the business. A proclamation was issued, ordering all who had taken part in the revolt to assemble at an appointed hour on the Champs de Mars outside the town, threatening with certain death all who disobeyed. As nearly the whole of the inhabitants, with the officers and crews of the ships, came under the terms of this order, and it being believed that the occasion was one for pronouncing a general amnesty, upwards of 10,000 persons mustered in obedience to the proclamation. The commissioners were present with a large body of troops and a numerous artillery, attended by the principal Jacobins of Toulon, who were called upon to select from the crowd those most deserving of punishment. This selection they made at random, according to whim or private animosity, but were content with picking out 2000 as incorrigible enemies of the people. These were set apart, and the guns pointed on them. At a given signal the matches were applied, and forth vomited the murderous shot. Great was the execution among such a dense mass, but the noise of dismal wailings told that many had survived it. A second and a third discharge scarcely completed the extermination, and the soldiers were at last obliged to use their swords and bayonets. The burial of the killed occupied several days. Such was the final scene of Jacobin fury at Toulon, and well indeed were the words of Fréron to the Committee realised. 'We are about to take,' said he, 'extraordinarily terrible measures; we know few of the representatives on mission up to our mark.'

Every attempt at rebellion had been crushed, except that which seemed to defy all efforts, however vast and ruthless—the insurrection of the peasants of La Vendée. In the arrogance of its successes elsewhere, and the imperativeness of audacious volition, the Committee of Public Safety had addressed a mandate to its armies in the west, commanding them to subdue La Vendée by a certain day. 'Soldiers of liberty,' it said, 'the brigands of La Vendée must be destroyed by the 20th of October. The welfare of the country demands it—the impatience of the French people wills it—their valour must accomplish it.' Although appearances at the time, and subsequently, were strongly against such a result, the extraordinary energy this government infused into all its agents caused its literal fulfilment within two days of the specified term. The garrison of Mayence, consisting of 17,000 excellent soldiers, had been released by the king of Prussia, on con-

requisition for 12,000 masons from the surrounding departments to demolish and raze the town, whilst every day since our entry we have caused 200 heads to fall.'—*Rech. &c.* p. 91.

dition of not serving against the allies for a year. Thus rendered available in the interior, it was forwarded by post to La Vendée, where, by dint of superior discipline, it soon turned the fortune of war against the unfortunate insurgents. The details of the horrible conflict that followed sicken and distress the mind; they form an unbroken tale of massacres, devastations, and atrocities such as revolt humanity, but too truly constitute the unfailing characteristics of civil war envenomed by religious and political fanaticism. The republicans were split into two factions, embodying the Jacobin and Anarchist elements; the one maintaining the necessity of some discipline and moderation, the other contending for pure sans-culottism and unbridled licentiousness. Their two principal armies were ranged under these different standards: that of Angers was commanded by Canclaux, a general of experience and capacity; that of Saumur by Rossignol, a mechanic, without a vestige of knowledge. Each of these commanders had a distinct plan of campaign, and having representatives with him of his own way of thinking, the Committee was distracted by their discordant accounts and mutual denunciations. It decided at last in favour of Canclaux's plan, which was to penetrate into La Vendée from Nantes and Angers on one side, and from Niort and Luçon on the other, sweep the country by concentric columns, and drive the population upon the Upper Loire, there to be exterminated, or thrust across the river. In the second week of September these inroads were essayed; but not being made simultaneously, owing to Rossignol's want of co-operation, all but the one directed by Canclaux himself, with the Mayencers, failed. The Vendéans had elected D'Elbéc to be their generalissimo, and were on foot to the number of 100,000 men. They completely defeated the columns of Luçon and Niort; and although worsted by Kleber—second in command to Canclaux—in several bloody engagements, they ultimately compelled the republicans to retrograde with tremendous loss. Perceiving the ill effects of a divided command, the Committee united the armies, under the name of the Army of the West, and appointed as its generalissimo Lechelle, a person singularly incompetent for such a trust, from the mere lack of personal bravery. But he was content to let Kleber command in his name, and during field operations he kept himself prudently in the rear. Another general invasion of La Vendée was agreed upon, according to the plan that had been so often tried. Starting from all points, the republican columns were to concentrate at Chatillon, in the heart of the country, and envelop the peasants on every side. Acting with more unanimity, three of these columns joined at Bressuire, and advancing to Chatillon on the 9th October, dislodged the Vendéans under Lescure and Larochejaquelein. These being reinforced from the main army, assaulted the republicans in their turn, and routed them with

great slaughter. Re-entering Chatillon, the peasants abandoned themselves to drunkenness and sleep. Westermann, who was distinguished for daring enterprise, mounted a hundred grenadiers behind as many hussars, and in the dead of night burst into the town. He executed a frightful massacre of the defenceless peasants, set several houses on fire, and before he could be intercepted, made good his retreat. On the 15th, the column advancing from Luçon was attacked by Lescure, who was prevailing against it, when he received a shot in the eye. His followers gave up the combat and fled. The following day the republicans effected their junction before Cholet, to which the Vendéans had fallen back. The latter, having with them their wives and families, formed an aggregate of 100,000 souls. From Cholet they retreated to Beaupréau, where their chiefs held a last council of war, to determine what course to adopt in their extremity. After much dissension, they finally agreed to risk a battle, as the only chance of recovering their homes. It was resolved to attack the republicans, who were posted in advance of Cholet. This great battle, which was to decide the fate of La Vendée, took place on the 18th October. The Vendéans counted nearly 40,000 fighting men; their adversaries about 25,000—scarcely a disparity, considering the countervailing advantages. After sundry alternations of fortune and heroic achievements of valour, the former were repulsed with great slaughter, and their two chieftains, D'Elbée and Bonchamps, mortally wounded.* Larochejaquelein and Stofflet alone remained of the chiefs to lead the discomfited remnants of their people. They fled with precipitation to the Loire, and not being briskly pursued by the conquerors, effected a passage across that river at St Florent. Reduced to the sad alternative of quitting their beloved country, or of being butchered by their savage enemies, they adopted the first with all the bitterness of anguish. Mournful, indeed, was their unhappy transit over the wide stream of the Loire, heartrending the wailing and lamentation of the women, despairing the cries of the warriors, who were in vain encouraged by their priests to put trust in the justice of Heaven. Eighty thousand souls composed this deplorable emigration, which went forth into a strange land, not knowing whither to direct its steps, or what object it was to pursue. After many wanderings in Brittany, and after sustaining numerous desperate encounters with republican armies, in which the indomitable character of the Vendean spirit was more than ever conspicuous, it melted rapidly away by fatigue, disease, and death, and was finally exter-

* Bonchamps, with his dying breath, intreated that 4000 republican prisoners, whom the Vendéans had carried along with them, and were preparing to shoot, should be liberated. The priests enforced his request, and the peasants reluctantly acceded to it. This example of clemency had no effect in restraining the brutality of the republicans.

minated at Savenai on the 23d December, in attempting to recross the Loire; so closing the eventful list of catastrophes that marked the first great Vendean insurrection.

The representatives attached to the army wrote to the Committee of Public Safety with the pompous and very premature announcement, *La Vendée is no more!* It filled the Jacobins with joy, but awakened only sentiments of ferocity. An insurrection that had occasioned them greater apprehensions than the hostilities of all Europe could not be too savagely avenged. It was determined that La Vendée should be laid waste, and turned into a desert. The trees were to be cut down, the hedgerows burnt, the crops spoiled, the cattle carried off, the houses demolished, the population killed or expelled. Turreau was appointed as the most fitting agent to carry out this barbarous purpose. He formed twelve columns to penetrate and traverse the country in every direction, and they received from him the appropriate designation of the *Infernal Columns*. Thus when a little mercy and forbearance might have conciliated the Vendéans to the new order of things, and extinguished the war, the opposite course of extreme vengeance was preferred, whereby the insurgents were driven to desperation, and the spirit of discord fomented and perpetuated. A fierce resistance was made by the peasants against the Infernal Columns in defence of their cherished homes, and in one of the engagements that occurred Larochejaquelein was killed. He was not twenty-one at the time of his death, yet he had won the love and admiration of the peasants more perhaps than any other of the chiefs. He combined the qualities of chivalric valour and frankness of character with great personal beauty and accomplishment. With him expired any pretensions of the Vendéans of the Bocage to fight pitched battles; henceforth the insurrection was desultory, but, driven from their own country, they extended its sphere, and gave rise to the Chouan war, which for so many years desolated all the provinces of the west. In Lower Vendée, Charette contended against the republicans with the pertinacity that distinguished him, but he could not prevent them from retaking the isle of Noirmoutiers, or from introducing their system of extermination into many parts of the Marais. The Infernal Columns overspread the whole of this devoted land, and consummated with relentless fury their horrible mission.

Not satisfied with ravaging the interior of the country, the Jacobins instituted a military commission at Nantes for the punishment as well of royalists as of Girondins. A man was at its head, a representative of the Convention, whose name has excelled in infamous celebrity those of all his compeers in wickedness—Carrier, to wit. Naturally of the most brutal disposition, he worked himself into a frenzy, which made him inac-

cessible to the slightest emotion of pity. To the supplications of the fairest women he was deaf as an adder; the prattling intreaties of children only infuriated him; and he involved all in a common destruction. As the Infernal Columns advanced, fugitives came pouring into Nantes, upon which they were purposely thrown, and he had soon nearly 10,000 persons in the prisons, including Vendéans and Girondins. He began, like the other proconsuls, by using the military commission as a tribunal, but he speedily ceased to observe any forms in his condemnations. He enrolled a gang of miscreants called the Legion of Marat, who carried his orders into execution with the alacrity that might have been manifested by that great apostle of blood himself. He guillotined and shot so many, that the bodies became a serious incumbrance; although trenches were dug to receive them as they fell, hundreds lay unburied, and the air was loaded with pestilential vapours. Disease began to emulate the murderer in devastation, and famine added all its horrors. Carrier was puzzled for a moment with the difficulty, which enraged him the more, that he was threatened with the loss of his victims by natural means. He saw the Loire running through the town, and the thought struck him that he might render it the instrument of death without having the trouble of bodies to dispose of. He tried a first experiment upon a party of priests, ninety in number, whom he caused to be removed in the night to a barge, which was taken into the middle of the river and sunk. The result satisfied him, and he applauded himself upon the aptitude and originality of his idea. He forthwith put it into practice upon an extended scale. Large boats were prepared, with plugged holes in the bottom and sides, into which he conveyed bands of two and three hundred persons—men, women, and children; when in deep water, the guards pulled out the plugs, and rowed off in a small boat they had for the purpose. Lest any of the doomed should escape, the Legion of Marat was stationed on the margins of the stream to kill those washed alive to the shore. Often 300 women, and as many children, were thus drowned at one time. Such executions he denominated *republican baptisms*. Several efforts were made to plead with him on behalf of women and children, but he repulsed the interceders with abuse and menaces, saying, 'They are all vipers and wolf-whelps.' With all his ingenuity, however, the dead bodies continued to give him annoyance. Floating down to the ocean with the stream, they returned with the flood-tide, and revealed to the horrified gaze of the inhabitants the extent of the massacre. Some ventured to upbraid its author, more to remonstrate with him: the expression of indignation or disapproval was fatal to them, and they swelled the list of victims. The water of the river was turned red even as far up as Saumur, and into the

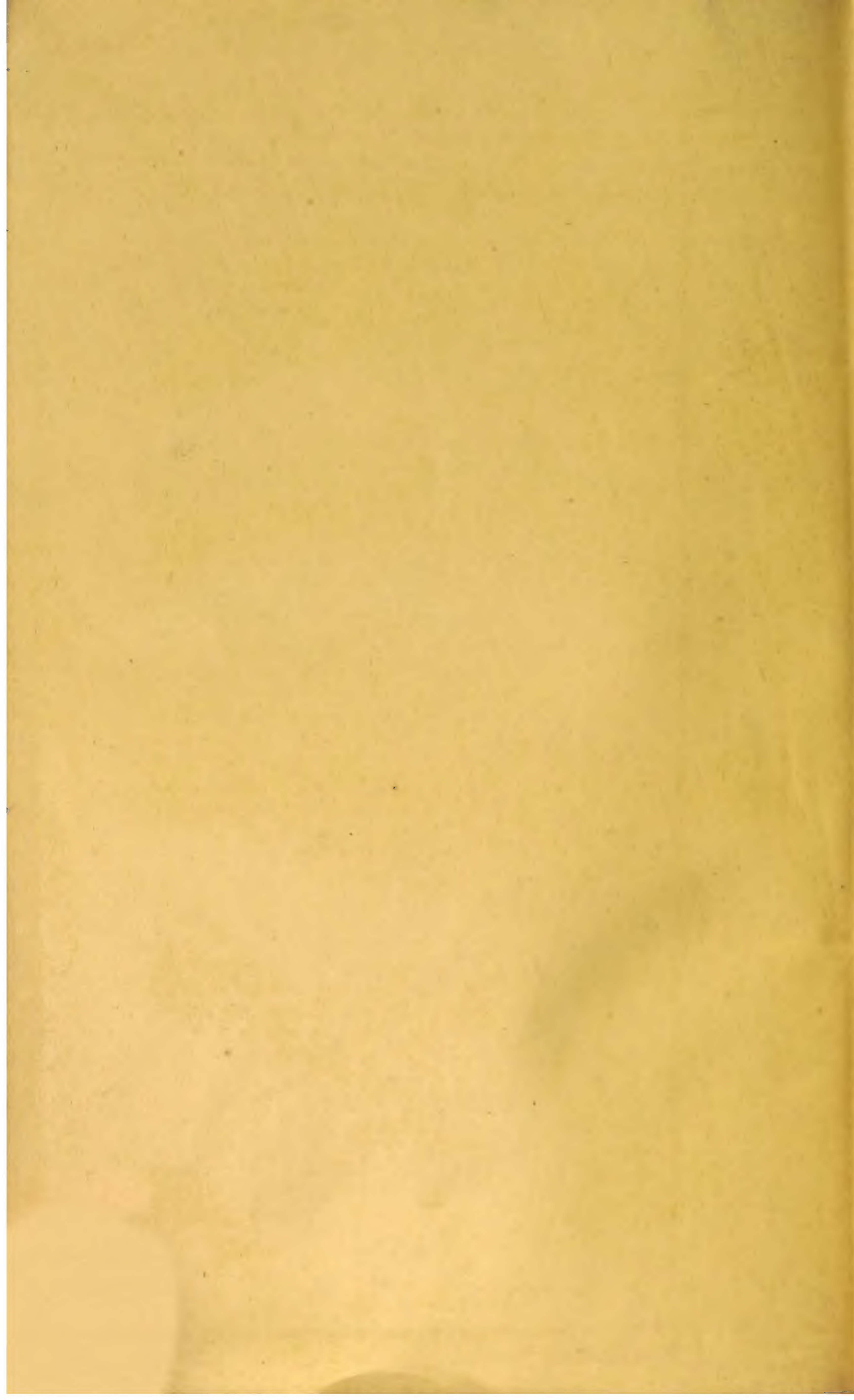
'dark blue sea' itself; moreover, it was so polluted that the fish were rendered foul, and the municipality forbade that they should be caught or sold. Birds of prey flocked to feed on the carcasses, and contended for their possession with sharks and other monsters of the deep. Undisturbed by these dismal phenomena, Carrier boasted of his exploits, and exulted in them to the Committee, whom he assured that he had discovered by far the most expeditious and sanitary mode of delivering the republic from its enemies. Verily, in the annals of this revolution, the *noyades* of Carrier have paled into dim light the *fusillades* of Collot d'Herbois and Fréron. Ten thousand persons of all ages perished in them.

Thus France, at the close of 1793, presented to the world on the one hand the glorious example of a nation freed by its own heroic exertions from the yoke of foreign despots, banded to overwhelm it on all its vulnerable points; and on the other, the deplorable spectacle of intestine feuds, stamped with the most hideous crimes that ever disgraced humanity in its lowest form. The lustre of the first is eclipsed in the gloom of the latter, and mankind withhold their applause from an energy which could maintain itself only by the excitement of blood, and which drew its sources from a fanaticism the most truly blind and ferocious ever witnessed among the erring sons of men.

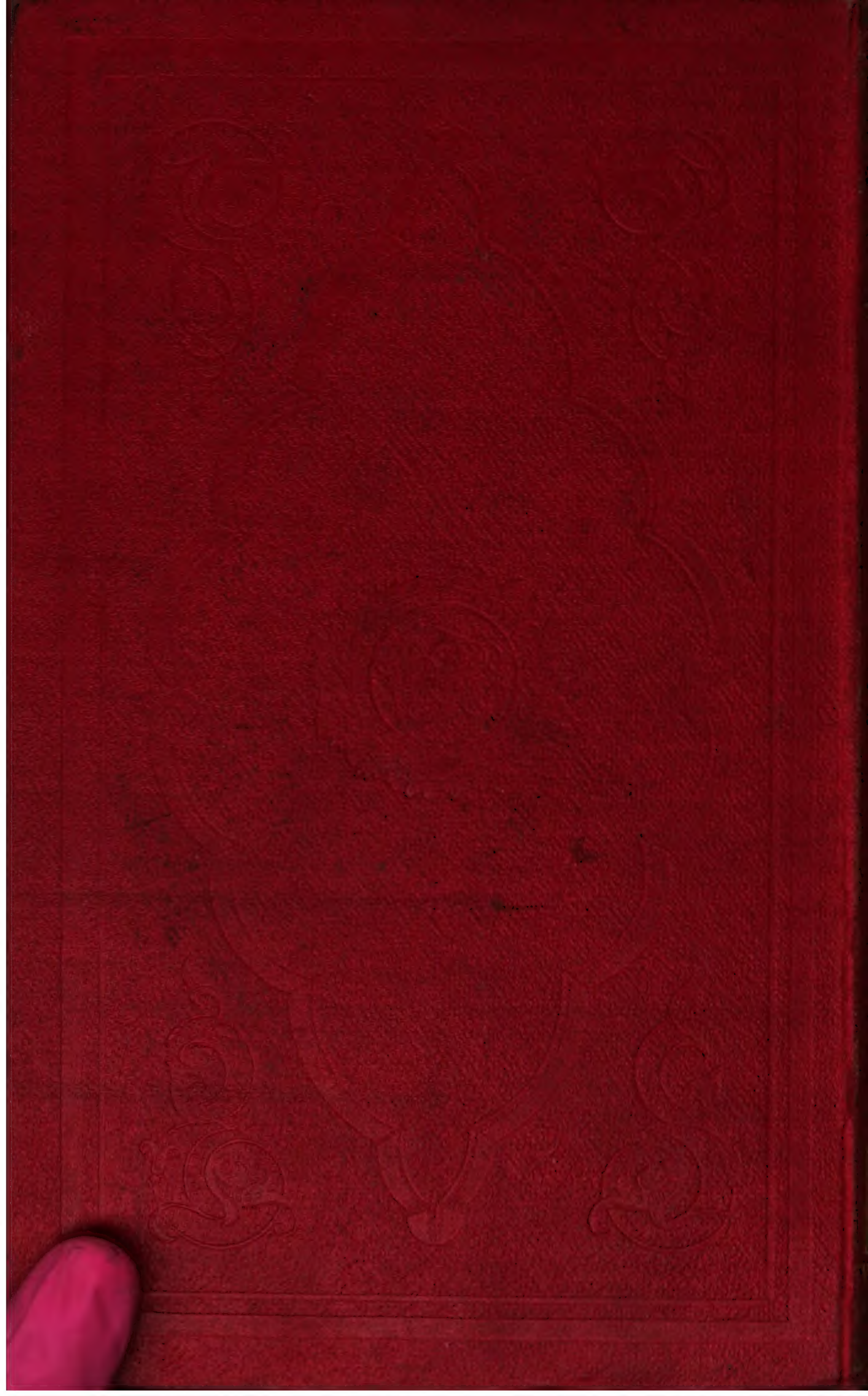
END OF VOL. I.

EDINBURGH:

PRINTED BY W. AND R. CHAMBERS.



1-3 5/-



Redhead, Thomas W.,

The French Revolutions from 1789 to 1848

Bd.: 1

Edinburgh (1848)

Gall.rev. 787 q-1

urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb10424052-5